



LITTLE VILLAGE

IOWA CITY'S NEWS & CULTURE MAGAZINE

VOL. 16 | ISSUE 152
APRIL 2 - 15, 2014



OF MONTREAL

KEVIN BARNES LOOKS TO THE PAST TO INFORM
HIS BAND'S INNOVATIVE SOUND. | PAGE 24

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Head and the Heart poster detail.
Illustration by Andrew Desforges



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LETTER: WHY WASTE WASTE?

Fiberight's Stacie Johnson responds to the March 19 edition of Your Town Now, which asked "Is Fiberight Right for Iowa City?"

My career in waste management started in a dumpster as part of a class project at Kirkwood Community College way, way back in 1995. My first job was with the Iowa Waste Exchange, a non-regulatory service that works with business and industry to divert "waste" businesses generate from the landfill to others who are able to reuse or recycle that "waste." It has been an interesting career, and I have yet to find anyone who thinks landfiling is a good for the economy, the environment or society as a whole. There has been one exception in almost 20 years and that was an engineer who designed landfills for a living (the quicker they fill, the more business he has). He went out of his way to not recycle, even throwing away \$.05 deposit bottles, which is really disappointing.

Even though no one thinks burying waste in landfills is a good thing, according to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowans generated and buried 2.6 million tons of waste, over half of which was paper, plastic, metal or organic in nature in 2013. That is a fact. Another fact is that we have had recycling education for the last 20 years encouraging people to do the right thing and recycle paper, plastics and metal as well as compost organics. It's important to continue that education and effort, especially as the concept of zero waste picks up in popularity.

There is a 2.6 million ton question looming in the background, though. While we work toward zero waste, should the "waste" (which is mostly paper, plastics, metal and organics) generated continue to be sent to the landfill? Fiberight, the company who has subcontracted

my services to source organics to "feed" its Blairstown Renewable Fuels Bio-Refinery, wants those materials for renewable fuel production. To clear up any misunderstanding—they want garbage, as is. They want you to recycle first and foremost—cardboard, paper, plastics, metals, wood, textiles, electronics, you get the picture. Not putting these things in the garbage ensures its highest and best value is guaranteed. However, we must recognize the fact that those materials are in our garbage. Think about it though: Does the act of putting these materials in a garbage bag make them garbage?

Rather than going to the landfill, Fiberight wants garbage to take a detour in order to recover every last pound of paper, plastics, metal and organics by sorting them out from the true trash. Based on their experience, about 20

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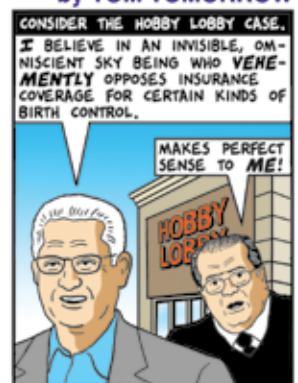
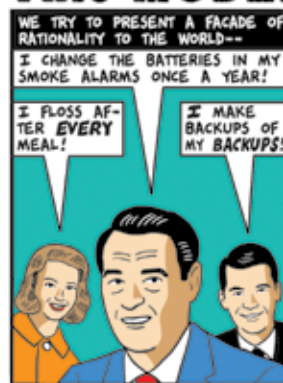
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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



percent of what comes in has no value today and must be landfilled. The other 80 percent, though, has value and can be recycled or used to produce renewable fuels.

The recyclables recovered will be treated no different than any other recyclables processed today. Low-grade cardboard, plastics, metal, in all honesty can be shipped overseas to places like China (6,500 miles from Iowa). Please ask your local recycling company about the distance your recyclables travel now, starting at the curb. The organics however, will travel 30 miles from Marion to Blainstown. Once in Blainstown the sugars and bio-gas locked in the organics are extracted. The sugars go on to make ethanol, however, those sugars could

NO ONE THINKS BURYING WASTE IN LANDFILLS IS A GOOD THING, BUT IN 2013 IOWANS GENERATED AND BURIED 2.6 MILLION TONS OF WASTE, OVER HALF OF WHICH WAS PAPER, PLASTIC, METAL OR ORGANIC IN NATURE.

be used to make many things. The bio-gas is sent to a boiler, which powers a turbine, which generates steam and electricity, which will help power the production process. And at the end of one of the processes, the hydrolysis of fibers, is a bio-pulp that will go on to make compost, so the soil amendment value of your organics will not be lost.

We understand Fiberright is different and that anything “different” can be perceived as not right in today’s world. Being different is a difficult hurdle to overcome. However, Fiberright is really no different than any other recycling company—they are a new “end market” for garbage, in full support of the current recycling and composting programs you have today. Fiberright believes diversity is needed in an “established” solid waste management world in order to recover all those resources, paper, plastic, metal and organics we know are being buried in local landfills today. Fiberright is investing \$42 million to help move Iowa closer to a zero waste reality. In the end, “different” can be good.

Stacie Johnson, a lifelong Iowan, has a degree in Environmental Management from Kirkwood Community College and has been promoting recycling and composting since 1995.

SCAN TO WITNESS HISTORY



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INTERACTIVE PRINT

MISSION: COMMUNITY

Mission Creek's contributions to Iowa City go well beyond the festival's dense lineup of artists. • **BY THOMAS DEAN**

April ushers in the vibrant colors of springtime (finally!), but it also sounds the first notes of our community's festival season. The Mission Creek Festival is here! Highly anticipated for its stellar lineup of musicians and other artists, Mission Creek is always an enjoyable showcase of the cultural vibrancy of our home.

Iowa City's festivals provide a level of top-name entertainment and cultural experiences uncommon to a community our size. Access to artists like Laurie Anderson, Philip Glass, Brian Evenson and Hannibal Buress, all part of this year's Mission Creek lineup, is always a point of pride and reason for excitement. And who doesn't enjoy hearing local and regional greats like Dave Moore, David Zollo and William Elliott Whitmore?

While it's a wonderful opportunity to experience the talents of artists, one of the most important benefits of festivals like Mission Creek is community building. Individual performances do not build community as much as the social capital fostered and strengthened by the festival itself: Showing up to a concert is great, but becoming involved and engaged is the stuff of community. Although attending a performance does give us an opportunity to commune with our neighbors and meet new friends, our festivals build social capital in much deeper ways, too.

Iowa City's festivals offer us the opportunity to enjoy and learn from the talents of our neighbors. Mission Creek's banner music program has grown to include literary and culinary events, a new film program in collaboration with FilmScene, a youth program at the

Iowa City Public Library and a tech and innovation conference. Go ahead and enjoy Philip Glass, but be sure to also interact with community members on the program: the local ed-tech entrepreneurs of Pear Deck; the brilliant chefs of Motley Cow, Trumpet Blossom, Leaf Kitchen, The Mill, Augusta and Devotay; local storytellers at Was the Word; and the UI undergraduates releasing the new *earthwords*.

The act of organizing an event like Mission Creek nurtures social capital, too. Robert Putnam, author of *Bowling Alone* (2000), says that social capital encompasses "features of social organization, such as networks, norms and trust, that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit." Behind that dry language lies the point that when people come together for a common purpose, community is fostered. Following on that definition, in the



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SHOWING UP TO A CONCERT IS GREAT, BUT BECOMING INVOLVED AND ENGAGED IS THE STUFF OF COMMUNITY. ALTHOUGH ATTENDING A PERFORMANCE DOES GIVE US AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMUNE WITH OUR NEIGHBORS AND MEET NEW FRIENDS, OUR FESTIVALS BUILD SOCIAL CAPITAL IN MUCH DEEPER WAYS, TOO.

essay “Building Social Capital,” retired Iowa State sociologists Jan and Cornelia Flora say that strong community is built when there is “a focus on process, rather than on ends only.” Based on the ideas of Putnam and the Floras, it seems that the process of putting together Mission Creek—the collaborations that must happen to make the festival—builds more social capital than the individual shows themselves.

Minimalists and conservatives sometimes claim that organizations like cities and businesses should focus on their basic functions: The job of a city is to provide streets, sewers

and public safety; the job of a for-profit business is to make money for its owners or stockholders; anything beyond is at best a distraction and at worst an illegitimate use of stakeholders’ resources. A community-oriented perspective sees it otherwise. The late sociologist Philip Selznick, who cogently defined the elements of community in his book *The Moral Commonwealth* (1992), says that “the more pathways are for participation in diverse ways and touching multiple interests ... the richer is the experience of community.” For Selznick, those pathways for participation occur primarily through a community’s institutions.

I’m glad, then, that many of the local public, nonprofit and for-profit organizations (including the city itself and our own *Little Village*!) that sponsor and help organize programs like Mission Creek believe it’s important to be part of building our community’s cultural and social capital by fostering its pathways. Our institutions’ participation can take a number of forms: from businesses and individuals contributing the funds to make the programs possible, to retailers transforming their shops

into art galleries with festival installations, to the city allowing space where anyone might spark an impromptu concert.

I thank those in our city and in our business and nonprofit communities for the wisdom to create and support the social infrastructure that makes our vibrant common life possible.

lv

Thomas Dean is starting to feel festive.



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EINS, ZWEI, DREI, APFELWEIN TIME!

Try your hand at making this traditional German cider.
BY FRANKIE SCHNECKLOTH



On a trip to Germany a few springs ago, I fell in love with apfelwein—a traditional German apple cider. My travelling companions and I spent two weeks drinking delicious bottles of super dry apfelwein that the mother of our host made by hand. She had spent the previous fall pressing apples harvested from her family orchard and making apfelwein that fermented in her cellar over the winter. By the time the weather was warm, the apfelwein was ready to enjoy.

Now, when spring arrives, I think of apfelwein. It's the perfect beverage for patio weather and working in the yard. My host's mother's brewing process was much more drawn out and intense, but here I've simplified

BREWING FOR BEGINNERS

Apfelwein is a great place to start for those wanting to dabble in home-made spirits.

Photo by James Davies

and quickened the recipe so the apfelwein will be ready in a matter of weeks. The result is super delicious, dry and refreshing—less a spiced-out commercial apple cider and more like a nice white wine. And, for those who've always wanted to try out home brewing, apfelwein is a great place to start. Prost!

1. Fill a large bowl with sanitizing solution following directions indicated on the One Step package. Add your airlock and funnel to solution and soak for 25 minutes. Fill carboy

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DEXTROSE (CORN SUGAR)

FUNNEL

AIRLOCK

NEUTRAL SPIRIT

EMPTY BOTTLES

BOTTLE CAPS

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or growler with appropriate amount of sanitizer as indicated by the package, fill with hot water and shake.

This is a crucial step: If materials aren't sanitized correctly, you could start growing bacteria and ruin your whole batch! So, be sure to clean container and parts thoroughly. When time is up, rinse all parts completely to remove any remaining residue and dry.

2. Pour 1/2 gallon of apple juice through funnel into sanitized growler. Add desired amount of dextrose to remaining apple juice. The dextrose boosts alcohol, so the more you add, the higher the alcohol content. For a gallon of juice, 7 ounces of dextrose is more than



enough. Shake to combine. Once combined, pour into growler.

3. Add half of the Montrachet yeast packet to growler.

4. Fill sanitized airlock with vodka or other neutral spirit, being sure to pour down the side of the airlock rather than into the central hole. Place airlock into the mouth of the growler.

5. Store growler in a dark, out-of-the-way place. Montrachet yeast performs well between 59-86 degrees, but best results come in 70-74 degree range, so choose a fairly warm spot. Let the juice ferment for about six weeks, checking on it daily. You'll want to see bubbly activity—that's how you know the juice is fermenting. And, because no yeast additive was used, the apfelwein will start to smell strange. This is part of the fermentation process: Ride it out!

6. After six weeks of fermentation, clean and sanitize your bottles and funnel. Fully submerge and fill with solution while soaking for best results. Empty and turn upside down on a towel to dry.

7. While bottles are sanitizing and drying, boil a 1/2-cup water in a small saucepan. Add 2 tablespoons of dextrose and remove from heat. Stir to dissolve. Combine with fermented juice.

8. Use sanitized funnel to portion fermented juice into clean bottles. Use bottle capper to seal.

9. Allow to sit for at least a week at 70-74 degrees to carbonate and bottle-condition. The longer you can wait, the better. After a week, you can move to a cooler spot. When you can't wait any longer, crack one open and enjoy in the yard.

*Note: Apfelwein takes about seven to eight weeks to brew. Montrachet yeast is a wine yeast, so alcohol content can be as high as 13 percent; less dextrose will make for an ABV as low as 7 percent. This yeast will produce a fairly dry cider. For something less dry, you can experiment with a different yeast. **lv***

Frankie Schneckloth cannot brew up delicious beer, but she has learned to make some pretty good apfelwein.

BREW OF THE MONTH: APRIL

SUCHA MUCH IPA

Kalona Brewing Company | Kalona, Iowa



The Kalona Brewing Company's signature IPA, Sucha Much, was named after a song by Paul Cebal and the Milwaukeeans titled "She's Such a Much." According to Lew Brewer, Kalona's co-owner and head brewer, the song is about a girl who is "such a much."

"We just felt that way about the beer," he said. While I am unsure what "such a much" actually means (maybe that's the point—I'd need to listen to the song), I do know that Sucha Much is one good IPA. That is why it is April's beer of the month.

Serve Sucha Much in a shaker pint glass. The color is deep gold with an amber tint. A half-finger of eggshell-colored head leaves a bubbly lacing and ring around the edge. An enticing aroma of citrus and tropical fruit wafts its way toward the nose from an arm's length away. Up close, scents of tangerine, mango, grapefruit (perhaps ruby red) and orange are strong and invigorating. There are also hints of strawberry licorice, candy caramel, toasted malt and pale malt.

The mouthfeel is full-bodied and creamy. The flavors are a citrusy-tropical blend of grapefruit, tangerine, mango, orange and lemon. The bitterness imparted by the hops is long-lasting, coating the tongue and cheeks. Though the citrus and tropical fruit flavors lose prominence as the beer warms, caramel, honey and pale and toasted malts become much more noticeable. Though Sucha Much is on the boozier side, weighing in at 7.1 percent ABV, the alcohol is completely masked.

Sucha Much is on tap at Kalona Brewery, as well as at local bars and restaurants. It is sold in 32-ounce mini growlers, and Brewer said that 12-ounce cans should hit local beer shelves sometime in April. **lv**

SERVING TEMPERATURE: 45–50° F. (Brewer said he prefers to drink beer around 50° F.)

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 7.1 percent ABV.


FOOD PAIRINGS: Sucha Much pairs well with steaks, roasts and soup, Brewer said. He and his wife often pair Sucha Much with takeout from Thai Flavors, including green curry with chicken, Pad Thai and dishes with peanut sauce.

WHERE TO BUY: Sucha Much can be found at most local beer retailers. It is also on tap at a number of downtown Iowa City establishments and at the brewery in Kalona.

PRICE: \$10 per 32-ounce mini growler.

Casey Wagner lives in Iowa City.

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NOT YOUR PARENTS' RECORD STORE

Jack White's Third Man Records brings first class promotion of underground music and literature to Mission Creek Festival. • BY PATRICK ORAY

There are plenty of record stores with considerable cultural cachet. Amoeba Music in Los Angeles has made a place for itself as a multi-media juggernaut. Waterloo Records in Austin, Texas, not only has a massive catalog to choose from, it's also famous for housing impressive live performances. Reckless Records in my hometown Chicago has forever cemented its cult status as the inspiration for the fictitious Championship Vinyl in the film *High Fidelity*. The brand these outlets have built for themselves helps ensure their survival in today's volatile market for cultural consumption.

WE'RE IN A UNIQUE POSITION WHERE PEOPLE ARE PAYING ATTENTION TO NOT ONLY WHAT WE RELEASE MUSICALLY BUT ALSO WHAT MOTIVATES THOSE DECISIONS.—BEN SWANK

Third Man Records also has its own brand and cachet to call upon; however, what's more impressive about this outfit is its commitment to providing a platform to develop and showcase the work of underground artists working in various media. In this regard, TMR is more than a brand: It's also a mission.

Founded by renowned musician and impresario Jack White in 2001, TMR established its base of operations in Nashville, Tenn., in 2009. Its physical location houses a record store as well as TMR's label offices, photo studio and darkroom, a live music venue and an analog recording studio. In addition to its

forays into music, TMR has now extended its ventures into the written word with the release of its first publication, an anthology titled *Language Lessons, Volume 1* through its literary arm, Third Man Books.

Little Village recently interviewed TMR co-founder Ben Swank and *Language Lessons* editor Chet Weise about their contributions to the record label's innovative approach to supporting underground artists.

LITTLE VILLAGE: How did each of you become involved with TMR?

BEN SWANK: Jack, Ben Blackwell and I have all known each other for a long time. I was working in London doing some media/label work, and when Jack decided he wanted to open a brick and mortar label/storefront, he got me and Ben involved from the beginning. A few months later I moved to Nashville, in 2009, and been doing this since.

CHET WEISE: Back in the day, we all played in bands—Soledad Brothers, White Stripes, Immortal Lee County Killers—that shared bills together. By the way, we still talk about loading up and down the steps at Gabe's.

As for more recent times, I curate a reading series in Nashville called *Poetry Sucks!* We feature music, poetry, prose, confessionals, comedy, etc. Swank has been involved with helping organize the event and has even participated, and, of course, both Jack and Swank have attended. Third Man Book's first publication of poetry and prose, *Language Lessons: Volume 1*, sprung from that reading series.

LV: TMR's website highlights a mission "to bring a spontaneous and tangible aesthetic back into the record business." What does this suggest about the significance of TMR's name, the motivation behind its efforts and how its mission applies to TMR's various artistic ventures?

BS: We strive to find new, amusing or interesting ways for people to engage with music and art. It's easy and awesome to sit at a computer and click a button and have music delivered immediately. It takes more effort to go to a physical location, make conversation and

discover something new ... but all of that effort is ultimately more rewarding and it helps encourage a more lasting experience and relationship with your fan base.

CW: I'm hard-pressed to think of any record label who has printed a book of contemporary poetry and prose, especially as a hardcover, especially including a double (yes, vinyl!) album of music ranging from free jazz, to Mississippi hill blues, to psychedelic punk-rock and live-recorded recitations from poets such as Sampson Starkweather and Jake Adam York. So, I think the *Language Lessons* anthology epitomizes what the question implies: a dedication to art and an ethos that keeps producing both music on vinyl (the best medium for listening) and the music of language on paper (the best medium for reading), and all in one place—a box set. Oh, and there will be broadsides of art included, too, for poems by the likes of CD Wright and Frank Stanford (unpublished poems, too).

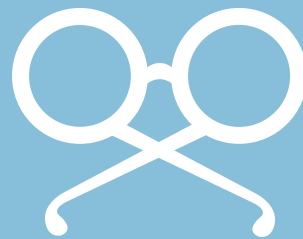
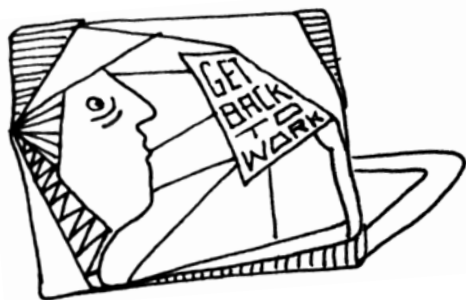
LV: TMR has its hands in a number of creative media. What's the significance behind this holistic approach to supporting underground artists?

BS: We're in a unique position where people are paying attention to not only what we release musically but also what motivates those decisions. They know there's real people behind the label. So I think if fans are paying attention, why not share things with them you feel they might want to get involved in. Music is just one part of the artistic conversation, so we like to present film, literature and visual art when it's relevant and hopefully folks pick up on that.

CW: For instance, last night I drank wine and watched Kenneth Anger on immaculate 16-millimeter film at TMR. There's nothing like Milk Duds, box wine and *Scorpio Rising*.

LV: What are the most rewarding aspects of your work with TMR? The most challenging?

BS: Ha ... they usually go hand-in-hand. Maybe this is a boring answer, but we have





a pretty relentless release and event schedule and I have a 10-month-old daughter at home. Time management can be a challenge for me. But it's ALL rewarding. Honestly, just knowing that people care about something you've put time and effort into is very rewarding and encouraging, daily.

CW: Baby Lula!

LV: Chet, you recently teamed up with the Mission Creek Festival to debut your edited collection, *Language Lessons, Volume 1*, at the Association of Writing Professionals conference in Seattle. Why should us Iowa City folk, denizens of a UNESCO designated "City of Literature," be reading Third Man Books' seminal publication?

CW: *Language Lessons* has uncollected and unpublished poems from CD Wright, Frank Stanford, Joshua Marie Wilkinson, Jake Adam York, Brian Barker, Steve Stern, Besmilr Brigham, TJ Jarrett and more. It also features poems by Ben Burr (our favorite taco chef in town), and non-fiction by punk rockers Richard

Hell (Heartbreakers, Television, Voidoids) and Tav Falco (Panther Burns), plus poems by National Book Award finalist Adrian Matejka, and a story by Pulitzer nominee Dale Ray Phillips. I'm dropping names like bombs to make a point: If you appreciate good writing from both Pulitzer Prize authors and taco-makers, you're going to enjoy something, somewhere in *Language Lessons*.

LV: In preparation for this interview I read an article on *Buzzfeed* titled "27 Breathtaking Record Stores You Have to Shop at Before You Die." What entry would you want written about Third Man Records?

BW: You know, just that there's personality and thought behind what is presented to fans when they enter our building. And that the folks working our counter are ALWAYS going to be friendly and helpful. Indie stores can be intimidating sometimes when you're first entering that world ... Also, we have a scapiotone machine and booth where you can record your own 45 record ... which is pretty awesome.

UNDERGROUND CHAMPIONS

Ben Swank (L) and Chet Weise collaborated on the prose and poetry anthology *Language Lessons, Volume 1*. | Photo by Jennifer Donahue

LV: Ben, why was it important for you to bring Third Man Records into the publishing business? What do you hope to accomplish, creatively, by this endeavor?

BW: It's a logical step in the right direction for the label. Again, music is only one part of the conversation ...

Third Man Records and its cadre of amazing underground music and literary artists will be performing at Gabe's on Saturday, April 5 during the Mission Creek festival. **lv**

Patrick Oray has been deputized by the Little Village to cover the IC area's art, culture and community beats.

CLIMACTIC SCENES

In the controversial comic *Sex Criminals*, when the main characters orgasm, time stops and the adventures begin. • BY ROB CLINE



Reading *Sex Criminals*—a creator-owned comic published by Image and written by Matt Fraction with art by Chip Zdarsky—feels both illicit and mainstream.

As the title suggests, the comic is filled to bursting with adult content, which has led some comic shops—and also iTunes—to refuse to carry the book. The plot revolves around Suzie and Jon, each of whom can freeze the world around her or himself by having an orgasm. The night they discover one another changes their lives forever. Their sexual histories and their sexual present are, of course, central to the story and are depicted fairly explicitly.

The book is collecting plenty of accolades; some of them coming from sources you might not expect would love a graphic (in both senses of the word) sex romp. For example, *Time* placed *Sex Criminals* at the top of the magazine's list of best comics and graphic novels of 2013. The folks at Iowa City's Daydreams Comics told me that *Sex Criminals* is popular, particularly with female readers who enjoy the sex-positive story featuring a young woman who doesn't need to be saved by a man.

While the book may not be for everyone, *Sex Criminals* is excellent—well written and stunningly drawn, with a clever plot and characters we come to love very quickly. The fifth issue of the title, which was released in

SPEECHLESS

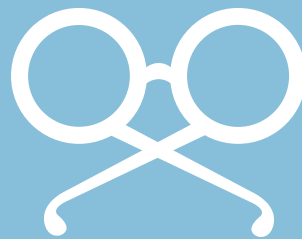
Chip Zdarsky's art is so effective, dialogue is often left to the reader's imagination.

mid-March, completes the first arc of Fraction and Zdarsky's story and will be collected in a trade edition. The book is on hiatus until June, so it's a good time to catch up.

Right from the beginning of the first issue, *Sex Criminals* thrusts us into a climactic scene (as it were). We see Suzie and Jon frantically having sex in a bathroom while threats—first tentative and awkward and then authoritative and scary—are shouted through the door. Suzie asks the reader not to judge, and then we turn the page to discover the story of her father's violent death, which launches us into her back story. Zdarsky's art, which is warm, inviting and expressive, draws us in immediately (sure, the sex scene is arresting, but Zdarsky isn't out to merely shock or titillate). The artist deserves much of the credit for how rapidly we connect with Suzie and Jon—Zdarsky has a gift for facial expressions, and some of the most effective panels in *Sex Criminals* have no dialogue at all.

Fraction devotes much of the first issue to Suzie's story, while the second issue brings Jon's history to the fore. Suzie's path to sexual

SEX CRIMINALS >> CONT. ON P. 30



BOOK PLUG

Boy, Snow, Bird

BY HELEN OYEYEMI

Helen Oyeyemi wins this month's award for "book I'm most curious about." Her newest novel, *Boy, Snow, Bird* takes inspiration from *Snow White* and wicked stepmothers in order to launch a complex discussion about race, identity, beauty and suffering.

The setting is 1950s New England. The title comes from the names of three women—Boy, a white woman who marries into a family who "passes," only to give birth to daughter Bird, whose skin color reveals the father's racial lineage. Snow, the father's daughter from a previous union, appears to be the beautiful princess in this twisted fairy tale, and yet she endures internal turmoil due to the obsessive attention she receives from admirers. "Skin as white as snow," anyone? This novel promises to help readers unpack whiteness as a beauty norm.

Oyeyemi rejected the M.F.A. workshop life and writes with image-ingrained lyrical complexity despite it. Porochista Khakpour writes in the *New York Times Sunday Book Review*, "The greatest joy of reading Oyeyemi will always be style: jagged and capricious at moments, lush and rippled at others, always singular, like the voice-over of a fever dream." *Boy, Snow, Bird* appears to be one of those novels that linger in the conscience long after that final page is turned.

—Melody Dworak

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OUT OF THIS WORLD

A scene from Matt Fraction's Sex Criminals.



Jon.

Wuh
happened,
Jon...?



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obvious?

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prisoner of
the Sex
Police.

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ART TO THE PEOPLE

The Art Genome Project is making the seemingly endless world of art comprehensible. Matthew Israel explains how. • **BY RUSSELL JAFFE**



Matthew Israel, art historian, author and director of The Art Genome Project, will be giving the closing talk for the first-ever Mission Creek Tech + Innovation Conference on Saturday, April 5 from 5-6 p.m. at the Englert Theatre. He spoke with *Little Village* about this ambitious project and the role of classification in art.

LITTLE VILLAGE: How does the Art Genome Project work, and what does it offer casual Mission Creek attendees who might not be otherwise knowledgeable in art or art history?

MATTHEW ISRAEL: I think for those attending the conference, The Art Genome Project, which is the search technology behind Artsy—a freely-accessible site whose mission is to make the art world accessible to anyone with an internet connection—is a great tool for finding, learning about and collecting art. Apart from Artsy’s database of over 100,000 works from major museums and galleries around the world, [The Art Genome Project is]

the other major educational resource we offer. Its primary use on the site is to provide suggestions to users based on what they search for, like on Pandora. We think this is really helpful since the art world can be very intimidating and it gives people a place to start, a way to navigate. From the suggestions you get, you can then start diving into Artsy to see our many other features, such as coverage of the latest art exhibitions, art fairs and benefit auctions; biographies on artists, and the ability to connect with galleries and museums.

LV: The Art Genome Project is based around classifying and categorizing, or tagging, art down to a fundamental level. Do you see an urge to classify or categorize as a natural human impulse?

MI: There’s a great quote by the writer Stephen Gould that was given to me a few years ago which addresses this topic. Gould explains: “Taxonomy (the science of classification) is often undervalued as a glorified form of filing—with each species in its folder, like a stamp in its prescribed place in an album; but taxonomy is a fundamental and dynamic science, dedicated to exploring the causes of relationships and similarities among organisms. Classifications are theories about the basis of natural order, not dull catalogues compiled only to avoid chaos.” In essence, Gould’s getting at the paradox of classification. On one hand it is simplifying—putting things in boxes. Yet at the same time, it is absolutely necessary for understanding how we live in the world and what we’re interested in.

LV: Can you talk a little bit about your background as an art historian and what brought you and your collaborators together to do this ambitious project?

MI: After studying art history in college and working in various capacities in the New York art world (primarily working for galleries and writing for magazines) I decided I wanted to pursue being a college professor and began working on my PhD in Art History and Archaeology at the Institute of Fine Arts, NYU. I finished my PhD in January 2011 ...

and started looking for a permanent teaching position. In the process ... someone who I had been a teacher’s assistant for when I first started teaching at NYU got in touch with me about taking on a role at Artsy. She said they needed an art historian to help them with something called “The Art Genome Project.” I was immediately very intrigued by the proj-

WE THINK THIS IS REALLY HELPFUL SINCE THE ART WORLD CAN BE VERY INTIMIDATING AND IT GIVES PEOPLE A PLACE TO START, A WAY TO NAVIGATE.

—**MATTHEW ISRAEL**

ect and really impressed by Carter Cleveland, Artsy’s founder, as well as Sebastian Cwilich, the President and COO. That was now over three years ago. Since then I’ve felt incredibly lucky to work at Artsy and with the amazing people that have joined Artsy since to work on The Art Genome Project, as well as the many other projects we are engaged with.

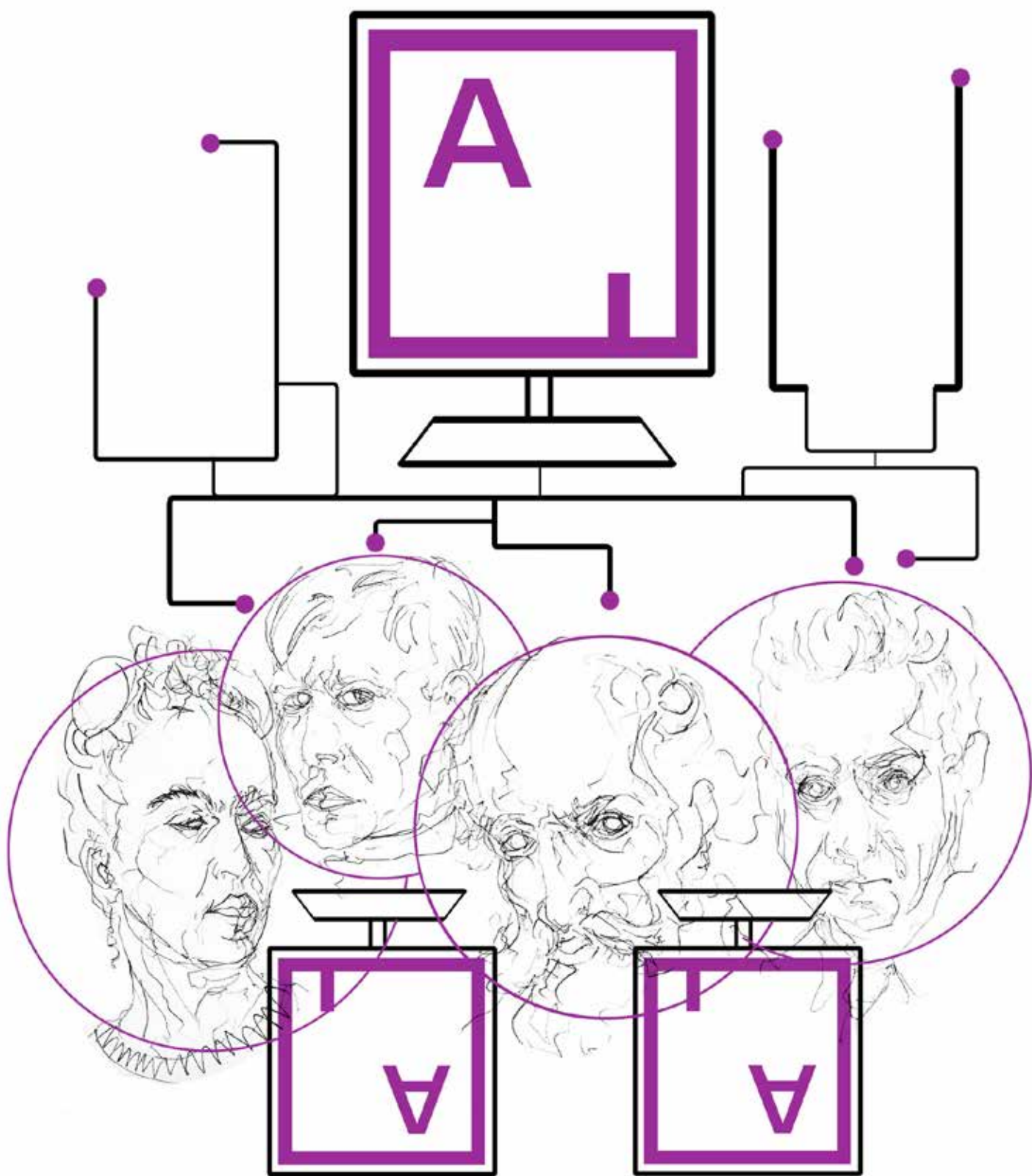
LV: What’s the future of the art genome project?

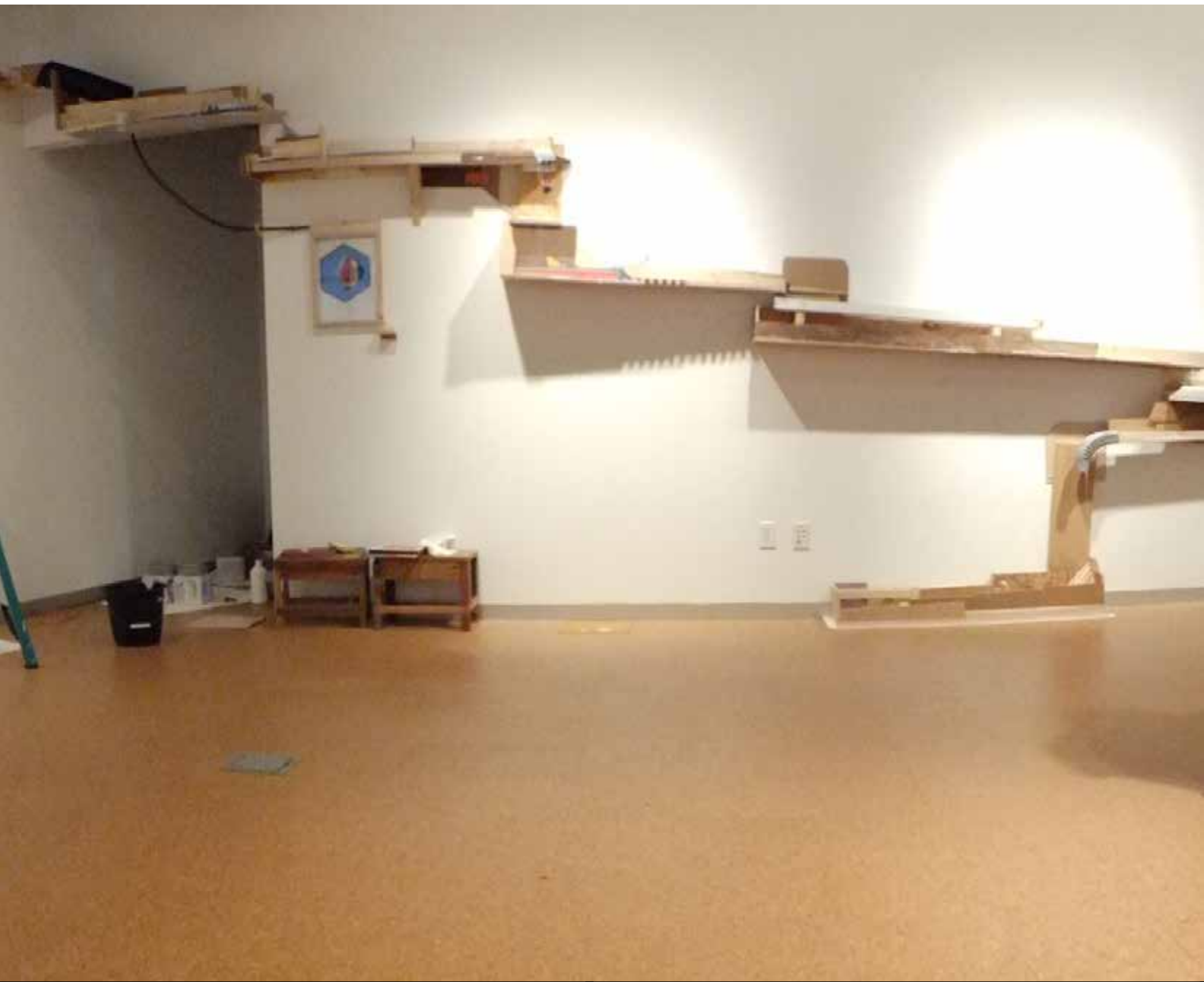
MI: In many respects, The Art Genome Project is still in its infancy. On one hand, I think we’ve made great strides in the three years I have been here (and in the less than two years since we launched the site in October 2012). We’ve created a similarity search for art that works—which I consider no small feat—and we’ve created a vocabulary of over 1,000 genes to identify art from all time periods. On the other hand, we want to continually improve the genome and push much further in the future to make our connections better and better and get more artworks on the site from the greatest museums and galleries around

MATTHEW ISRAEL >> CONT. ON P. 31

MATTHEW ISRAEL AT MCF’S TECH + INNOVATION CONFERENCE

April 5 | 5 p.m. | Englert Theater | Free
Illustration by Jacob Yeates



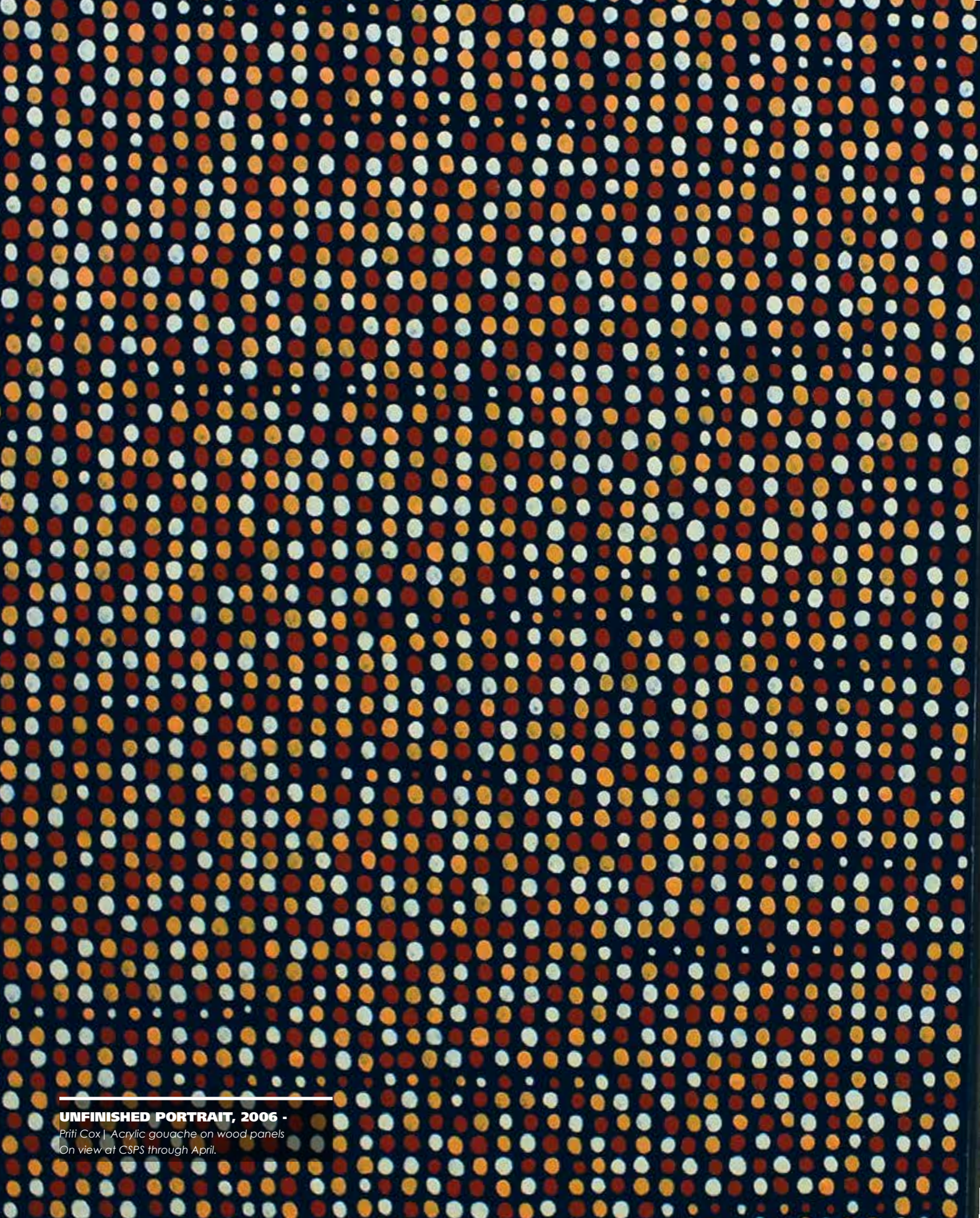




DONKEY FEVER

Installation by Josh Doster. Photo by Adam Burke.





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RESTLESS SPIRIT

Kevin Barnes (of Montreal) discusses his new band and the influences behind his latest LP, *Lousy With Sylvianbriar*. • BY RANDAL O'WAIN

With 12 studio albums in less than two decades, of Montreal frontman Kevin Barnes could easily be named one of the hardest-working musicians in the Indie-rock scene, especially considering the fact that he wrote and recorded nearly every track on the band's last six albums, including its most recent release, *Lousy with Sylvianbriar*.

"I played everything myself and just pieced songs together one instrument at a time and really entered the very laborious process of 'now I'm gonna add the bass, now I'm gonna do percussion.' It's very fulfilling to build something up out of nothing and hear this pretty complex arrangement."

I GET BORED WITH THINGS QUICKLY, AND SO I'M ALWAYS SEARCHING FOR THE NEXT WAVE TO RIDE IN A WAY. THEN I SORT OF RIDE IT UNTIL IT GETS BORING AND THEN I LOOK FOR ANOTHER ONE.

—KEVIN BARNES

Even more impressive than Barnes' prolific output is how complex and diverse each record sounds. Whether it's the earlier folk pop of *The Gay Parade* or the Prince/Bowie-infused electro pop of *False Priest*, there is some essential "spirit" running through of Montreal's discography. A "restless creative spirit" that Barnes says sends him searching for new inspiration.

"I get bored with things quickly, and so I'm always searching for the next wave to ride in a way. Then I sort of ride it until it gets boring and then I look for another one."

Much of Barnes' creative and artistic decisions stem from following this restlessness. In the case of *Sylvianbriar*, his instincts led him to San Francisco where he spent a few weeks roaming the city or holed up in a Mission District apartment writing music and reading Cormac McCarthy or Sylvia Plath.

"It could have ended as a totally failed experiment," Barnes says about his move to California to work on the new record. "It was, ya' know, going out on a limb to go to this other city, spend a lot of money, invest a lot

of time, and if I didn't write anything, then it would have just been kind of a waste. But I was able to develop something that was sort of nebulous and abstract in my mind—ya' know, as far as the direction I wanted to go for the next record."

Lousy With Sylvianbriar, as a whole, is a testament to Barnes' intuitive impulses. In order to fulfill his artistic vision, Barnes had to dismantle and rearrange the band's scaffolding. "I felt, maybe, a little frustrated with the way that things had been going and just wanted to shake things up and inject this new spirit into the project."

The latest record includes a cast of musicians that are as equally new to each other as they are to of Montreal. According to Barnes, none of the musicians had ever played together, and some had "never been in the same room before."

Besides playing with new musicians, Barnes decided to record the *Sylvianbriar* on an analogue tape machine that he bought and installed in his home recording studio. And, unlike the previous six of Montreal albums, all the musicians on *Sylvianbriar* played live together as opposed to Barnes tracking the songs one instrument at a time.

"I was trying to use techniques that people used to use in the '60s and '70s, when you'd get a band together and they'd have their songs pretty well rehearsed, and you'd just put them in a room for a couple of days and record everything and make all of the creative decisions on the fly—don't second-guess things, and just live with the artistic decisions you make. The vision was to make something that feels very spontaneous and raw and that has good emotive quality to it."

Influenced by Bob Dylan, early Rolling Stones, The Kinks and Gram Parsons, *Lousy with Sylvianbriar* calls to mind a blend of early garage rock and folk. Barnes manages to pull off an album that is totally unique, yet still in conversation with his musical forebears.

"All of the things that I've really loved the past 10 years or so influenced the new record, [as well as] wanting to make something that, at least on a more surface level, was focused on the vocals and the lyrics."

Besides the subtle nod to Sylvia Plath in the

title, *Sylvianbriar*, Barnes integrates the author into the album through songs like "Colossus," which channels Plath's biography: "your mother hung herself in the National Theater when she was four months pregnant with your sister who / would've been 13 years old today / does that make you feel any less alone in the world?"

"I was haunted by the story of Plath, of her life and her work as well," Barnes says. "It just became a bit of an obsession for me, and for some reason I felt like her spirit was helping direct where I went creatively."

Of Montreal is renowned for lavish, yet lovely, theatrical showmanship—Barnes' alter ego, Georgie Fruit, riding a white horse on stage comes to mind. When I ask Barnes what Iowa City can expect for the show at this year's Mission Creek Festival, he boasts that the video projection for the *Lousy with Sylvianbriar* tour is both "very psychedelic and transformative." Barnes says that of Montreal's theatrical performances come from "an interest in doing something out of the ordinary, different than other rock shows. It doesn't feel jarring at all to go on tour and do theatrical things on stage. It's in our DNA, I guess. It's just natural for us."

Come see of Montreal's performance for yourselves, Thursday, April 3 at Blue Moose Tap House, 211 Iowa Ave. Doors: 5:30 / Show: 6:30 \$18 - \$22. **lv**

Randal O'Wain is a fiction writer and essayist from Memphis, Tenn. whose work appears, or is forthcoming, in The Oxford American, BOOTH, Crazyhorse, Redivider and Hobart, among others. He now lives in Iowa City where he is an MFA candidate in nonfiction at the University of Iowa.

OF MONTREAL

April 3 | 6:30 p.m. | Blue Moose | \$18
Illustration by Jacob Yeates





MISSION CREEK MASTER PLAN

Co-host of KRUI's The Fuzz Fix is here with a guide to help you get your mission freak on. • BY MELISSA ZIMDARS

Hopefully you've all been eating tons of Iowa pork belly, going to readings at Prairie Lights and attending shows at The Mill in order to prepare and condition (much like a football player does in the off season) for this year's Mission Creek. If you haven't, I promise not to judge you too harshly for relying on performance-enhancing drugs (I am going with coffee, but you do what you gotta do), because you are going to need it to take advantage of all that Mission Creek has to offer in 2014. In addition to all the awesome food, literature and music options you've traditionally been able to pick from, this year features the new Tech + Innovation Conference and film events in partnership with FilmScene. In case you're not as type-A or into crafting intricate spreadsheet calendars as I am, I thought I'd share my Mission Creek plan.



TUESDAY, APRIL 1

• **6 P.M.** Might as well start Mission Creek off right with a three-course Iowa pork dinner at Motley Cow Cafe.

7:30 p.m. The University of Iowa lecture committee is then co-hosting Laurie Anderson at the Englert, where she will give a talk entitled *Some of My New Projects*.

• **9 P.M.** As much as I would like to see Mark McGuire at The Mill (8 p.m.), I will probably hang out at Gabe's most of Tuesday. Co-presented by KRUI, Annalibera (an electro-alternative group out of Des Moines) will start the night, followed by Iowa City's own Alex Body and then Warpaint (indie rock from Los Angeles).

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2

• **6 P.M.** I will begin Wednesday evening at Prairie Lights in order to hear Kembrew McLeod (a.k.a. RoboProf) read from his new book, *Pranksters: Making Mischievous* in

LOS VOLTAGE

w. *Vietcong Man Son, Centaur Noir, Spray Paint, Teen Daad* | Deadwood Tavern (upstairs)
5 p.m. Doors | Photo by Zak Neumann

the Modern World, released April Fools Day. Part of me wonders whether this is all some grand prank, but I am somewhat assured of the book's existence by the companion prankster cards I already possess. D. Foy will also be reading from his new novel, *Made to Break*.

• **8 P.M.** I assume many of you will be seeing the always hilarious Hannibal Buress (7 p.m.) at the Englert, but I will most likely be grabbing some quick food before heading to Gabe's for Circuit Des Yeux, New Bums and Earth (drone doom). Seriously, EARTH!

• **12:15 A.M.** Then I plan on heading to the Yacht Club for what will undoubtedly be one of the weirdest and coolest performances of Mission Creek: Wolf Eyes (an avant-garde,

post-industrial noise band from Detroit).

THURSDAY, APRIL 3

• **6 P.M.** My plan is to start day three of Mission Creek at the same place I started day two: Prairie Lights. I didn't make it to much of Mission Creek's literary lineup in 2013, so this year I plan on righting that wrong. Sarabande Books will be celebrating its 20th anniversary (with free booze!). Also, Angela Pelster and Kyle Minor will be reading from their respective story collections, *Limber* and *Praying Drunk*.

• **8 P.M.** Once I am good and liquored up, I will be heading to Trumpet Blossom for the Slow Collision Press/*Little Village* reading, where Todd Jackson, Brent Johnson and Sean Genell will read alongside Spring 2014 Hot Tin Roof honorees Mackenzie Bean and Lisa Roberts. Although, again, this is a tough choice because I love Oneohtrix Point Never (Daniel Lopatin), who will be performing at The Englert before Philip Glass.

• **11 P.M.** I will likely end my night at The Mill (doors open at 8 p.m.) with S. Carey of Bon Iver (Wisconsin represent!). If you know me, you know indie folk isn't normally my style, but I have a soft spot for this dude and his sounds.

FRIDAY, APRIL 4

• **5-8 P.M.** The Lit Crawl will take place throughout downtown during this time. Check out missionfreak.com for details.

• **9 P.M.** I'll be at The Mill yet again until bar close (assuming I don't get kicked out earlier) to hear The Lonelyhearts, Nat Baldwin and Kishi Bashi. For most people, this will probably be a busy night of bar hopping, but I plan on taking it easy in anticipation of a seriously packed Saturday.

SATURDAY, APRIL 5

• **11:30 A.M. AND 1 P.M.** Trumpet Blossom is hosting another delicious vegan brunch to help mitigate your Mission Creek hangovers and get you fueled for the day.

• **3 P.M.** Presses and magazines from around the country will be at The Mill for the Fifth Annual Small Press and Literary Magazine Book Fair. Plus, New Belgium Brewery and Jim Beam will be handing out samples, and it never hurts to top off the tank.

• **5 P.M.** The Tech + Innovation Conference

officially starts on Saturday, and while I won't be able to attend as much as I'd like, I do plan on seeing Matthew Israel at the Englert, who will deliver his keynote public lecture about technology, The Art Genome Project and making art accessible to people around the globe.

- **6 P.M.** Angry Hour at Deadwood is always one of my favorite parts of Mission Creek. This year features Los Voltage and Vietcong Man Son.

- **8:45 P.M.** In my opinion, the Englert is the place to be early Saturday evening as The Pines (folk-rock) and William Elliott Whitmore (folk-country) will be playing ...

- **11:30 P.M.** ... and then Gabe's is the place to be later on Saturday, which is Mission Creek's night of fuzzy, garage-y, rock 'n roll. Nashville's Ultras S/C will perform some experimental pop/psychedelic music followed by an Iowa City favorite, Paul Cary and the Small Scaries.

SUNDAY APRIL 6

- **11 A.M. AND 1 P.M.** (two seatings) If I make it out of bed in time, you will find me at The Mill's carnivore brunch drinking a bloody mary and eating ALL the bacon.

- **9 P.M.** Back to the Mill for locals Sweet Chariot and ex-pats Foul Tip, opening for Chicago psych rockers Dead Rider who will close out the fest.

Even though this schedule is already pretty full, there will hopefully be room to check out several FilmScene events, too. For daily Mission Creek updates, and to see how well I'm executing this ridiculous plan, go to littlevillagemag.com. **lv**

Melissa Zimdars co-hosts The Fuzz Fix every Thursday from 6-8pm on KRUI.

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DEEPLY SELF-AWARE

In Lars von Trier's *Nymphomaniac: Volume 1*, the characters' sexual urges and naivety become allegory for artist and audience.

BY SCOTT SAMUELSON



Lars von Trier has a flair for being provocative. Remember when he called himself a Nazi? His new movie, *Nymphomaniac: Volume 1*, which opens at FilmScene on April 4, is no exception. The title is deliberately titillating, as is the poster, which shows the main character having an orgasm. Actually, there's a whole series of posters with all the principal characters having orgasms. Most press about the movie devotes a detailed paragraph to how its explicit sex scenes were made by digitally fusing the actors' good-looking parts with porn stars' raunchier parts. Aren't you a little curious about Shia LaBeouf's and Stacy Martin's genitalia doubles?

But there's more to *Nymphomaniac: Volume 1* than sex. In fact, the sex scenes, while fairly graphic, aren't that big of a deal (*Volume 2* is a slightly different story). As is usual with von Trier, what shocks and wounds are the sharply-edged performances that come at you from every direction, from the intentionally artificial to the rawly emotional (wait 'til you get a load of Uma Thurman's cameo). I'm no devotee of von Trier and his abusive visions, but I think that *Nymphomaniac* is his best film since *Breaking the Waves*.

The story begins when Seligman (Stellan Skarsgård) comes across a bloody, barely-conscious Joe (Charlotte Gainsbourg) in an alley. She doesn't want an ambulance, much

TAKES TWO TO TANGO

Charlotte Gainsbourg stars as nymphomaniac, Joe.

less the police, so the kindly Seligman takes her back to his apartment and gives her a cup of tea. In return, Joe tells him her story, from her childhood search for vaguely erotic pleasures (there's a wonderful, slightly-disturbing scene where she and her friend as little kids dump water all over the bathroom floor and make frog motions in it), through her escalating nymphomania, to her eventual numbing.

Von Trier has found a cinematic way of evoking how it feels to stumble on and to devour a good old intellectual-erotic novel, like Georges Bataille's *Story of the Eye*. With a blend of courtliness, precision and raunchiness, *Nymphomaniac* unfolds in neatly arranged chapters, each one inspired by some seemingly random comment from the intelligent Seligman. The fusion of what's highest and lowest in human nature is marvelously achieved in one scene where a three-part polyphony of J.S. Bach is orchestrated with the sex styles of three of Joe's lovers.

Joe, I imagine, is meant as a stand-in for von Trier as an artist, and Seligman as a stand-in for the kind of people who go to see Lars von Trier movies. He's worldly, irreligious, almost impossible to shock and nice to a fault.



MISSION CREEK FILM



Spinning Plates

DIRECTED BY JOSEPH LEVY

APRIL 2, 6:30 P.M. | FILMScene

What does a rural Iowa diner have in common with a restaurant that charges \$250+ per person for dinner? Find out while noshing on treats from Clinton Street Social Club and Delux Pastries.

These Hopeless Savages

DIRECTED BY SEAN CHRISTOPHER LEWIS AND KAITLYN BUSBEE

APRIL 3, 6:30 P.M. | FILMScene

Iowa City's own Working Group Theatre debuts their first film. Watch the flick and after the screening hear from the directors, cast and crew themselves.

Who the *\$&% is Jackson Pollock?

DIRECTED BY HARRY MOSES

APRIL 4, 6:30 P.M. | FILMScene

In this documentary/detective story, learn what happens when the quirky protagonist purchases a Pollock painting for \$5 at a thrift shop.

Two Lane Blacktop

DIRECTED BY MONTE HELLMAN

APRIL 5, 3 P.M. | FILMScene

After watching this 1971 road movie, Tim Kinsella will read from his book *Let Go and Go On and On* which tells the story of *Two Lane Blacktop* star, Laurie Bird.



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Joe improvises her story with what's familiar to Seligman—fly-fishing, the Fibonacci sequence, Bach—in order to convey her obsessions and shock him awake. Irreligious herself, she nonetheless longs for the supernatural reality of sin, both as a way of having something substantial to violate and as a way of honestly addressing her own brutal drives.

While this allegory of artist and audience

IRRELIGIOUS HERSELF, SHE NONETHELESS LONGS FOR THE SUPERNATURAL REALITY OF SIN, BOTH AS A WAY OF HAVING SOMETHING SUBSTANTIAL TO VIOLATE AND AS A WAY OF HONESTLY ADDRESSING HER OWN BRUTAL DRIVES.

comes across loud and clear, there's simultaneously a living, breathing reality to Joe and Seligman, in large part illumined by the superb performances of Gainsbourg and Skarsgard. What I find irritating about a lot of von Trier's movies is that his cinematic world is often composed exclusively of abusers and doormats. But Joe and Seligman outstrip any form of categorization, especially in their curious collaboration in telling the story.

In a way, *Nymphomaniac*'s real subject isn't sex but storytelling. Basically the recipe is to

evoke the world in its all its desirous, awkward fleshiness, but also to understand and order it with graceful precision. For instance, when Joe is first deflowered, a math equation tallies the number of times that her 15-year-old beau humps her. (Not that many.) There's even an oddly affecting—and helpful!—scene where parallel parking is mapped with geometric precision.

Not everyone's a Seligman (the name means "blessed one" in German); not everyone is going to listen with equanimity to the obsessive, violent stories told by von Trier. I bet people have stormed out of every one of his movies in disgust or rage. *Nymphomaniac*, particularly *Volume 2*, is no exception. His movies are like kids who do increasingly naughty things in hopes that their indulgent parents will finally lay down the law and punish them. But you have to appreciate the imaginative art that he employs in his wild attempt to turn us against him. **lv**

Scott Samuelson teaches philosophy at Kirkwood Community College and blogs about music with his son at billyanddad.wordpress.com.

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>> SEX CRIMINALS CONT. FROM P. 16

understanding includes a stop in a school bathroom stall for a hilarious—and disturbing—tutorial from another student. We see Suzie falling in love with the local library, an institution the adult Suzie, with Jon's help, will go to great lengths to try to save from foreclosure. The issue also includes a beautifully composed page showing Jon wooing Suzie at a party by reciting a passage from the controversial classic *Lolita*. It's a credit to both creators that we can think of this as a little discomfiting and completely sweet at the same time—which could also be said of the overall story.

As the series progresses, we meet the villains of the piece, including a stern woman who leads some sort of sex police force that pursues our heroes into what Suzie calls “The Quiet”—the out-of-time space they enter after orgasm. We learn more about Suzie and Jon, including the latter's struggles with a behavioral disorder and the medication used to treat it. And, in the third issue, we encounter an epic musical number made meta and magnificent

by a permissions delay. Yellow text blocks obscure the uncleared lyrics as we are told: “... we started joking about doing a musical number in the book. And, as we've now hit our male lead in the face with a dildo, we figured—why not? So we decided it would be 'Fat Bottom Girls' by Queen because it's kind of the greatest song of all time ... We even had to send in script pages and everything. Just think—BRIAN MAY might have read this page before you did. Crazy right? Anyway ... we just couldn't get the license arranged in time. Maybe for the trade, we'll see.”

This breach of the fourth wall could be disastrous, but by this point, Fraction and Zdarsky have established that we're all in on the jokes and silliness and sentimentality that drive the story (a sense enhanced by the extensive letters sections that are included at the end of books two through five). In fact, this scene works so well one hopes it doesn't get changed for the trade.

The fifth issue wraps us with our sex criminals on the run and several story threads dangling. Fraction and Zdarsky have set things up well

for a great second arc. I'm looking forward to catching up with Suzie and Jon in June. **IV**

Born colorblind and therefore convinced he'd never enjoy graphic forms of storytelling, Rob Cline was first bitten by the comics bug in college. The resulting virus lay dormant for many years before it was activated by the inscrutable work of Grant Morrison. Now Cline seeks out the good and bad across the comics landscape as the Colorblind Comics Critic.



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>> MATTHEW ISRAEL CONT. FROM P. 20

the world. We also want to make sure that the genome works for those using the site to collect art—since it's these users which allow Artsy to become a viable business and The Art Genome Project (as well as our other broader educational initiatives) to exist.

Additionally, I think the whole site is moving towards greater personalization, and The Art Genome Project will have a large role in this, since it helps us identify so many more ways in which to make connections for our users. I'm also really excited to see The Art Genome Project be used as a learning tool in schools. Along with our freely-accessible database of images, we hope that students around the world will use it to start understanding art. We're really proud of our Digital Ready partnership with the New York City Department of Education, which has brought Artsy into 14 high schools around the city, and we look forward to more ways in which to reach students in different ways around the world.

LV: Can you explain a little bit about your role at Mission Creek? What will you be doing?

MI: I hope to end the conference on an inspiring note. My talk will concern historical attempts to help people fall in love with art; what we're doing now in this area and what we can do better in the future.

As a side note, I'm really happy to be speaking about tech innovation outside of New York and San Francisco and thus engage with talented people in the Midwest working in the field. I also love the fact that this conference engages both the art and technology audiences and think this is a great fit for Artsy.

LV: Lastly, are there any parts of the festival you're looking most forward to?

MI: To be honest, I haven't had a chance to finalize what I am doing and I think part of this is every time I look at the list of events I want to go to them all. I have to say, though, that I'd love to be able to catch Rachel Kushner, Of Montreal, The Head and the Heart, Philip Glass, Warpaint and going to the book fair and the lit crawl. **lv**

Russell Jaffe is a genealogically dissonant man doing genealogically dissonant things.



OPENS
APRIL 4

NYPHOMANIAC

A Lars von Trier film



OPENS
APRIL 11

THE UNKNOWN KNOWN

An Errol Morris documentary

BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE CHINA
APR. 11 & 12

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APRIL 5
MATTHEW ISRAEL
MISSION CREEK FESTIVAL

APRIL 5
**WILLIAM ELLIOTT WHITMORE
AND THE PINES**
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APRIL 12 } **DARSOMBRA**

APRIL 19 } **BO RAMSEY
& HIGHWAY 12**

APRIL 26 } **CATFISH KEITH**

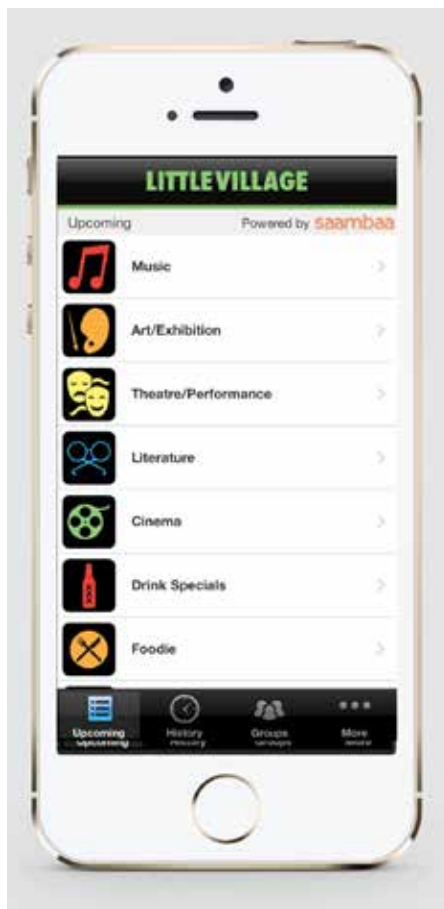
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MUSIC

ONGOING:

APRIL 1 - 6: Mission Creek Festival Various venues (downtown Iowa City) details at missionfreak.com

MONDAYS: Open Mic with J. Knight The Mill, Free, 8 pm

TUESDAYS: Blues Jam Parlor City, Free, 8 pm

Lower Deck Dance Party Iowa City Yacht Club \$2, 10 pm

WEDNESDAYS: Waits, Whiskey and ... Oysters? Clinton Street Social Club Free, 5 pm

Free Jam Session and Mug Night Iowa City Yacht Club Free, 10 pm

THURSDAYS: Open Mic Uptown Bill's Free, 7 pm

Daddy-O Parlor City Free, 7 pm

Gemini Karaoke Blue Moose Tap House Free, 9 pm

Karaoke The Vault-Cedar Rapids, Free, 12 am

FRIDAYS: Dueling Pianos The Vault-Cedar Rapids Free, 9 pm

SATURDAYS: Dueling Pianos The Vault-Cedar Rapids Free, 9 pm

Karaoke Checkers Tavern Free, 9 pm

SUNDAYS: Sunday Funday Wildwood Smokehouse & Saloon Free, 11 am

Marching Band Practice Public Space ONE Free, 3 pm

WED. APRIL 2, 2014

Spiritual Drum Circle Journey Church, Donation, 5 pm

Tom Nothnagle FilmScene, Free, 5 pm

Oneohtrix Point Never Gardner Lounge, TBA, Free

The Weeks Blue Moose Tap House, \$12, 7 pm

Jose Raul Lopez Riverside Recital Hall at UI, Free, 7 pm

The Olympics, John June Year, Sleepy Kitty The Mill, \$5, 8 pm

Earth, New Bums, Circuit Des Yeux Gabe's, \$15, 8 pm

THU. APRIL 3, 2014

River Glen FilmScene, Free, 4:30 pm

of Montreal, Dylan Sires & Neighbors, Ark Life Blue Moose Tap House, \$18-\$22, 6 pm

Philip Glass, Oneohtrix Point Never The Englert Theatre, \$25-\$100, 7 pm



Weekend w. Fake Your Own Death, Common Loon Iowa City Yacht Club—April 4, 9 p.m. (\$8, 19+)

Weekend hails from San Francisco, birthplace of the Grateful Dead, Girls and a number of other cheery, upbeat psychedelia-influenced bands. Weekend couldn't be further from that. They play a form of dream pop that is dark, melodic and hypnotic. I think that this will be the sleeper hit show of Mission Creek. —AH

Amy Finders and the Jet Set Uptown Bill's, \$8, 7 pm

S. Carey, Skye Carrasco, Jack Lion, Golden Birds The Mill, \$12-\$15, 8 pm

Mission: Deep David Last, bTsunami, Giant Questionmark, Drumai Iowa City Yacht Club, \$8, 9 pm

Dessa, Toki Wright & Big Cats, Ion Gabe's, \$12-\$15, 9 pm

FRI. APRIL 4, 2014

Java Blend Exclusive Hour With Dylan Sires and Neighbors Java House, Free, 2 pm

DJ Gordon Gartrell FilmScene, Free, 5 pm

White Tornado Campbell Steele Gallery, \$10-\$12, 7 pm

The Mark Avery Band Parlor City, Free, 8 pm

The Head and the Heart, Basia Bulat The Englert Theatre, \$20-\$25, 8 pm

Jason Isbell, David Zollo & The Body Electric, Jason T. Lewis



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Blue Moose Tap House, \$20-\$22, 8 pm

Cities Aviv, AWTHTKTS *Gabe's, Free, 8 pm*

Tim Wehrle, Mind Over Mirrors, Ben Seretan, Haunter
Trumpet Blossom Cafe, \$6, 9 pm

Lonesome Road *Chrome Horse Saloon, Free, 9 pm*

Crazy Delicious *Wildwood Smokehouse & Saloon, \$5, 9 pm*

!!!, Caroline Smith, Trouble Lights *Gabe's, \$15, 10 pm*

SAT. APRIL 5, 2014

Beginning Group Guitar *West Music Marion, \$60, 11 am, 12:30 pm*



Wolf Eyes w. Taser Island, Curt Oren, Mating Call *Iowa City Yacht Club—April 2, 9 p.m. (\$8, 19+)*

With a discography that makes even the most prolific artists weep, Michigan's Wolf Eyes has been constantly on the cutting edge of noise music, changing from ambient fear to aural assaults. Anything—literally, anything—can happen at one of their shows, and this will be one for those who are not afraid. —AH

JULIANNA BARWICK w. VASILIOUS | DANFORTH CHAPEL—APRIL 9, 7 P.M. (\$10-\$14, ALL AGES)

Last year—like every year for the last four—I have worked as a producer during the Mission Creek Festival (Full disclosure: I am working Mission Creek Festival this year). This gives me the opportunity to check out as many bands as possible. One of the major experimentalists that was brought in last year was William Basinski, who is best known for The Disintegration Loops. While I remember what he looked like—long white hair, leather blazer—I can't really remember what he sounded like.

The thing that I remember from the show—and which stuck with me long after the festival—was Julianna Barwick. A solo artist living in Brooklyn, Barwick also makes experimental music, but it stands out from the genre in a particular way. Experimental music has a tendency towards being cold and distant, intriguing the mind but not necessarily the heart. Julianna Barwick touches the mind and the heart, and this comes through in the way that she makes her music.

Her instrument is her voice. She creates loops and builds various textures that can make a large, cavernous space seem small and intimate. This ability to condense a space and bring the audience close to her makes the choice to put her in Danforth Chapel an inspired one. The small chapel that sits in front of the Iowa Memorial Union will allow everyone to get up close and personal. As well, the space will give her ambient soundscapes space to grow and move, which will be an experience to behold.—A.C. Hawley

ABOUT THE CALENDAR

THE *LITTLE VILLAGE* CALENDAR serves hundreds of area venues and reaches 150,000 readers per month. Listings are published free of charge at littlevillagemag.com/calendar, on the free calendar app **Best of I.C.** (iOS, Android) and in *Little Village Magazine* (on a space-available basis).

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CALENDAR

BOOKMARK EVENTS IN THE LV APP: Text IOWA to 77948

MUSIC (cont.)

Dustin Busch *Motley Cow Cafe, Free, 1 pm*

Nadalands *Revival, Free, 3 pm*

Irish Sessions *Uptown Bill's, Free, 4 pm*

MCF Local Showcase: *Los Voltage, Centaur Noir, Viet Cong*

Man Son, Spray Paint (ATX), Teen Daad Deadwood Tavern

(Upstairs), Free, 5 pm

Har-di-Har *Campbell Steele Gallery, \$10-\$12, 7 pm*

Evan Stock Band *Parlor City, Free, 8 pm*

William Elliott Whitmore & The Pines, Dave Moore *The*

Englert Theatre,, 8 pm

Language Lessons: Vol I, Paul Cary and the Small Scarys,

King of the F**king Sea, Sam Locke-Ward and the Garbage

Boys XXL, Brooke Strause & The Gory Details with readings

from Bill Hillman and Janaka Stucky *Gabe's, \$8, 8 pm*

Fruition, The Muckrockers, Brian Johannesen *Iowa City*

Yacht Club, \$10, 9 pm

Jesse Sykes & Phil Wandscher, Dewi Sant, Adam Faucett,

Alexis Stevens *The Mill, \$10-\$12, 9 pm*

40 Stories *Chrome Horse Saloon, Free, 9 pm*

Hoosier Highway *Wildwood Smokehouse & Saloon, \$5, 9 pm*

Farewell My Concubine, Father Finger, Gem Jones, Max Grey

Trumpet Blossom Cafe, \$5, 10 pm

SUN. APRIL 6, 2014

Fatal Addiction, Doppelganger, From Hated to Heroes, Caught

in the Crypt *Blue Moose Tap House, \$10, 5 pm*

Red Molly *Legion Arts CSPPS Hall, \$15-\$18, 7 pm*

Dead Rider, Foul Tip, Sweet Chariot *The Mill, \$8-\$10, 8 pm*

Glimpse Trio *Gabe's, Free, 9 pm*

Winterland *Parlor City, Free, 6 pm*

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Gallery talk by Willie Cole, April 4, 4:15 pm

Gallery talk by Patterson Sims, April 30, 4:15 pm

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Left: Willie Cole, *Magna tji wara*, 2006, bicycle parts, 48 1/4 x 23 x 9 in. Lent by the Flint Institute of Arts, Flint, Michigan.



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MUSIC (cont.)

Piano Sundays (featuring Rene Lecuona and Studio) Old Capitol Museum, Free, 1:30 pm

MON. APRIL 7, 2014

Typhoon, Wild Ones, Hollow Wood Blue Moose Tap House, \$12, 7 pm

The O's (Oasis Stage Presents) Gabe's, Free, 9 pm

TUE. APRIL 8, 2014

G-eazy: These Things Happen Tour, Rockie Fresh, Tory Lanez Blue Moose Tap House, \$18-\$20, 7 pm

Jimkata Gabe's, \$5-\$8, 9 pm

WED. APRIL 9, 2014

Burlington Street Bluegrass Band The Mill, \$5, 7 pm

Johnson County Landmark Jazz The Englert Theatre, Free, 7 pm

Julianna Barwick with Vasillus IMU Danforth Chapel, \$14, 8 pm

Audacity w. Coathangers Gardner Lounge, 9 pm, Free
Griz Power in Numbers Sping Tour 2014, Michal Menert (Pretty Lights Music), Late Night Radio Blue Moose Tap House, \$15-\$20, 9 pm

Sweaters, Las Gruff, The PBJS Gabe's, Free, 9 pm

THU. APRIL 10, 2014

AER, Ground Up, DJ Smiles Blue Moose Tap House, \$15-\$17, 6 pm

Fry Street Quartet Riverside Recital Hall at UI, Free, 7 pm

Casting Crowns with Laura Story and For King & Country US Cellular Center, \$18-\$48, 8 pm

Dustin Busch Clinton Street Social Club, Free, 8 pm

FRI. APRIL 11, 2014

Java Blend Exclusive Hour With Crankshaft Java House, Free, 2 pm

1st Annual BMAI Bluegrass Goes Pink Festival Clarion Hotel Highlander Conference Center, \$15-\$35, 6 pm

Goran Ivanovic Campbell Steele Gallery, \$10-\$12, 7 pm

Yelawolf, Tone Da Boss Blue Moose Tap House, \$20-\$22, 7 pm

April Verch Band Legion Arts CSPA Hall, \$17-\$21, 7 pm

Hailey Whitters First Avenue Club, Free, 7 pm

Hancher Presents: Sones De Mexico The Englert Theatre, \$10-\$30, 7 pm

Luther College Jazz Orchestra The Mill, \$3-\$5, 7 pm

Craig Eric Expedition Parlor City,, 8 pm

Bass Drum of Death w. People's Temple Gardner Lounge, 9 pm, Free

Aaron Kamm & The One Drops Iowa City Yacht Club, \$8, 9 pm

New Trick Chrome Horse Saloon, Free, 9 pm

Subliminal Chaos Gabe's, \$10, 9 pm

Granger Smith Wildwood Smokehouse & Saloon, Free, 9 pm

SAT. APRIL 12, 2014

Sleeper Agent, Holy Child, Pagiins Blue Moose Tap House, \$12-\$15, 5 pm

CANCELED! Moya Brennan Legion Arts CSPA Hall, \$22-\$27, 8 pm

8 Seconds Chrome Horse Saloon, Free, 9 pm

Euforquesta Album Release Party, Family Groove Company Gabe's, \$10-\$12, 9 pm

North of 40 Wildwood Smokehouse & Saloon, \$5, 9 pm

Darsombra, United Teachers of Music, Sweet Chariot The Mill, \$6, 10 pm

SUN. APRIL 13, 2014

Paul Shaw Riverside Recital Hall at UI, Free, 3 pm

OSG Parlor City, Free, 6 pm

Iowa City Community String Orchestra The Englert Theatre, Free, 3 pm

Don Williams Paramount Theatre Cedar Rapids, \$35-\$55, 6 pm

Miranda Sings The Englert Theatre, \$26-\$50, 7 pm

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Huun-Huur-Tu *Legion Arts CSPA Hall, \$15-\$18, 7 pm*
Center for New Music Ensemble *Riverside Recital Hall at UI, Free, 7 pm*
Sky Ferreira, Trouble Lights *IMU Ballroom, Free-\$31 8 pm*

MON. APRIL 14, 2014

Clint Black *The Englert Theatre, \$45-\$70, 8 pm*

TUE. APRIL 15, 2014

Iowa Brass Quintet *Riverside Recital Hall at UI, Free, 7 pm*

ART/EXHIBITION

ONGOING:

THROUGH APRIL 27: **Julia Byerly & Curtis Kraetsch** *Cedar Rapids Public Library-Ladd Library, Free*

THROUGH APRIL 30: **Exuberant Politics** *Legion Arts CSPA Hall, Free*

THROUGH APRIL 10: **Exuberant Politics** *Public Space ONE, Free*

Through May 25 **Papier Francais** *Cedar Rapids Museum Of Art, Free - \$5*

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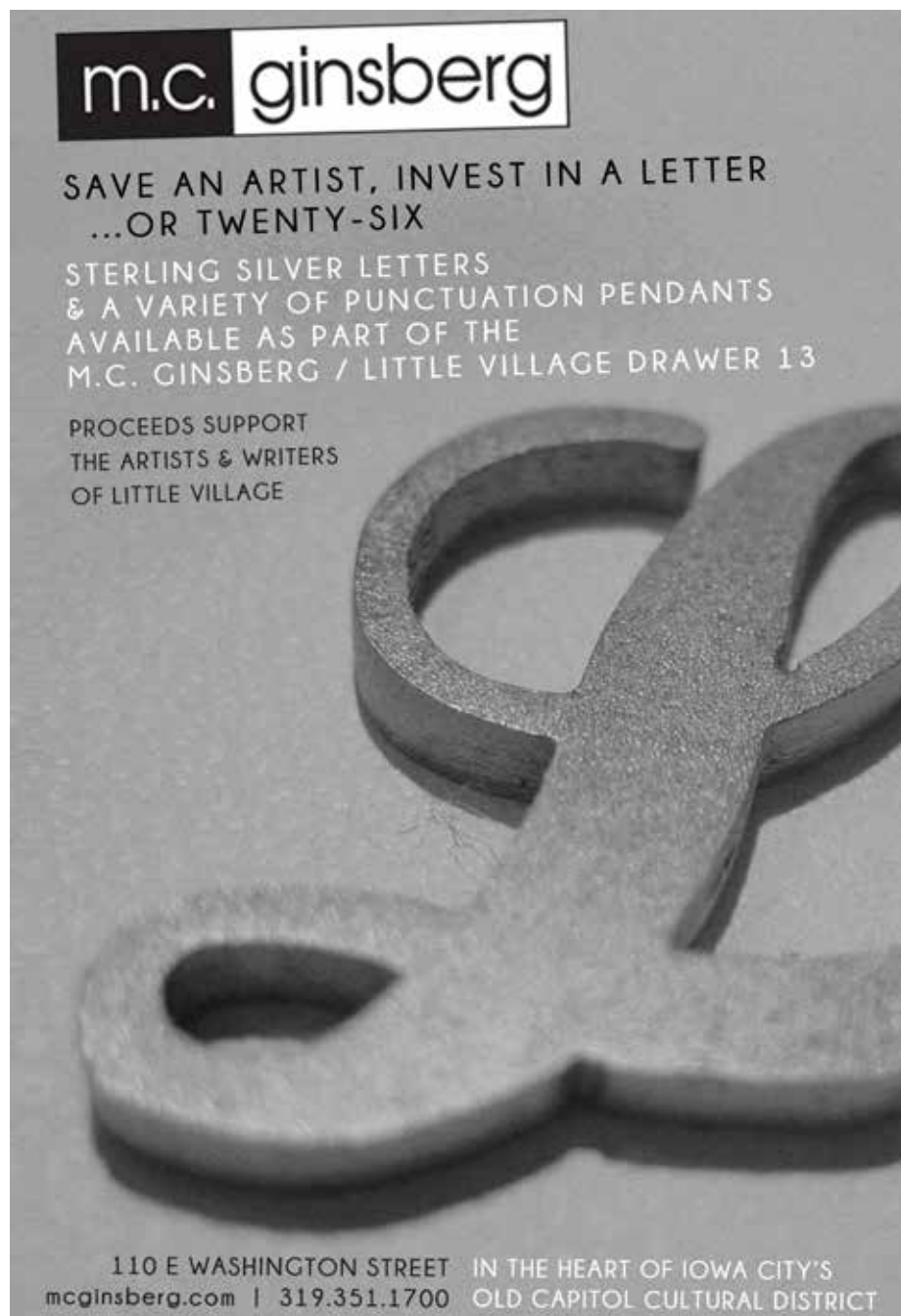
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Slaughter City | UNIVERSITY OF IOWA THEATRE BUILDING | APRIL 10-20 (\$5-\$17)

The theatre has provided a forum for exploring labor issues ever since the heyday of the “workers’ theatre” movement in the 1920s and ’30s. Many plays during this period were influenced by the theories of German playwright Bertolt Brecht, who believed that theatre should engage audiences intellectually in order to inspire them to act after the curtain falls. In 1935, Clifford Odets ended his play *Waiting for Lefty* by having the actors urge the audience to leave the theatre shouting, “Strike! Strike!”

UI Playwrights Workshop alumna Naomi Wallace gives the genre an update with her 1996 play, *Slaughter City*, an inventive and abstract comedic drama about workers at a meat packing plant. Their lives take a turn when a mysterious new coworker encourages them to rise up and protest against their unsafe working conditions. Using poetry, dark imagery and raw sexuality, Wallace provides a vivid commentary on the history of labor rights in the United States.

The University of Iowa Theatre Arts Department is presenting *Slaughter City* as part of Series on Arts and Rights (SOAR), a year-long artistic initiative of the UI Center for Human Rights and the Division of Performing Arts. SOAR aims to present works that comment on human rights issues and the play is the last event in the series. Do not miss this opportunity to engage in dialogue about labor in the context of human rights—and whether the injustices of the past are in danger of repeating today.

SAVAGE LOVE DISCLOSING

Responding appropriately when something personal surfaces during sex.

• BY DAN SAVAGE

My boyfriend of three months, “Marcus,” told me last week that he is a trans man. He has performed oral sex on me and fingered me, but he never let me reciprocate and told me he didn’t want to have penis-in-vagina sex yet because to him that was a large commitment. We go to college in a conservative part of the country, and almost no one here knows. He worried that if I found out, I would expose him to our friends and peers and perhaps even press charges (because we had sex when I did not know he was trans). Truthfully, had I known, I don’t think I would have had sex with Marcus. Before I found out he was trans, I was deeply attracted to him and was falling for him. Now, I no longer feel either of those things and do not know if I can continue dating him. I feel like a small-minded bigot that my romantic feelings about Marcus are based on something as randomly distributed as a

penis. Marcus wants to continue to date and to have sex to see if my feelings can change. I don’t think they will. But I’ve never been in this position before, and I don’t know anyone who has, so maybe this is a growing experience? Am I being a bigot? I feel very alone because I can’t talk to any of my friends about Marcus being trans. Do you have any advice?

No Clever Acronym

“NCA is clearly struggling,” said M. Dru Levasseur, a trans activist, attorney and co-founder of the Jim Collins Foundation, an organization that funds gender-confirming surgeries for trans people. “She met a guy, she’s deeply attracted to him and is falling for him, and then she finds out something she didn’t expect. He’s trans.”

Before you dump Marcus—if you dump

ART/EXHIBITION (cont.)

Through Nov. 2 Marvin Cone on My Mind Cedar Rapids Museum Of Art, Free - \$5

Through May 11 Conger Metcalf Cedar Rapids Museum Of Art \$0-\$5, All Day

Through April 2 Sirus Fountain Legion Arts CSPA Hall, Free, All Day

Through June 30 Iowa Manufacturing: A Family Portrait Exhibit Brucemore \$3-\$7, All Day

Through May 25 Poe: A wilderness of Mirrors Old Capitol Museum Free, All Day

Community Work Time Public Space ONE Free, 1 pm

Through May 25 The Northwest Passage and Oceans Beyond: An iowan Sails into History Old Capitol Museum, Free, All Day

Through May 25 People of the North Star Old Capitol Museum, Free, All Day

Every Saturday Through April 31 Cold Connections: A Beginner’s Workshop in Jewelry and Metal Cedar Rapids Sciences Center, \$150, 2 pm

Every Sunday through April 13 Green Bike Building Class Cedar Rapides Science Center, \$100-\$120, 1 pm



WED. APRIL 2, 2014

Art Bites ~ Curating the French Exhibition *Cedar Rapids Museum Of Art, Free, 12 pm*

FRI. APRIL 4, 2014

UIMA April First Friday *FilmScene, Free, 5 pm*

SAT. APRIL 5, 2014

Mission Creek Photography by Bill Adams *Motley Cow Cafe, Free, 1 pm*

WED. APRIL 9, 2014

Cythia Brinich-Langlois *Arts Iowa, Free, 7 pm*

THU. APRIL 10, 2014

Lisa Sanditz *Arts Iowa, Free, 7 pm*

SAT. APRIL 12, 2014

Midwest Section Meeting of the American Scientific Glassblowers Society *Beadology, Free, 9 am*
American Glassblowers Society Midwest Section Meeting *Beadology, Free, 6 pm*

**THEATRE/
PERFORMANCE****ONGOING:**

TUESDAYS: *Pundamonium Iowa City Yacht Club, \$6, 8 pm*

WEDNESDAYS: *Spoken Word Uptown Bill's, Free, 7 pm*

Open Mic - Comedy *The Vault-Cedar Rapids Free, 7 pm*

THROUGH APRIL 13: *Marion Bridge Riverside Theatre Iowa City*

THROUGH APRIL 13: *Private Lives Old Creamery Theatre \$18.50-\$28, 2 pm*

THROUGH APRIL 12: *To Kill a Mockingbird Theatre Cedar Rapids \$10 - \$30, 7 pm*

APRIL 4 - 6 AND APRIL 11 - 13: *Jesus Christ Superstar Coralville Center for the Performing Arts \$12-\$22, 7 pm*

APRIL 5 - 19: *Stuart Little Old Creamery Theatre \$9, 2 pm*

APRIL 10 - 20: *Slaughter City Theatre Building at UI \$5-\$17, 8 pm*

APRIL 13 - 15: *Scales and Tails Owl Glass Puppetry Center, \$5,*

WED. APRIL 2, 2014

Hannibal Buress *The Englert Theatre, \$15-\$25, 7 pm*

FRI. APRIL 4, 2014

ComedySportz fundraiser for Hardacre Theater Preservation Association *Tipton High School, \$5-\$10, 7 pm*

The Lord of the Underworld's Home for Unwed Mothers. *Muscatine Community College, \$3-\$5, 7 pm*

SPT Theatre *Legion Arts CSPS Hall, \$20-\$25, 8 pm*

SAT. APRIL 5, 2014

Ballet *Cedar Rapids Public Library-Downtown, Free, 10 am*

Comedian Rex Havens *Cedar Ridge Vineyards, \$55, 6 pm*

Stage Benders *The Vault-Cedar Rapids, \$15, 7 pm*

The Rite of Spring *Paramount Theatre Cedar Rapids, \$19-\$49, 7 pm*

SPT Theatre *Legion Arts CSPS Hall, \$20-\$25, 8 pm*

SUN. APRIL 6, 2014

Was the Word *The Englert Theatre, \$10, 7 pm*

Stage Benders *The Vault-Cedar Rapids, \$15, 7 pm*

MON. APRIL 7, 2014

Iowa's Rising Star Stand-Up Comedy Contest *Iowa City Yacht Club, \$3, 9 pm*

Marcus—Levasseur recommends exploring your feelings.

“Does NCA not see Marcus as a man now? Is she sure he doesn’t have a penis? Trans guys have amazing dicks that are different from cis guys’ dicks (surgery or no surgery)—how does she know she won’t like it or even prefer it? Is she afraid of social rejection if people were to find out she was dating a trans person? If she really wants to explore this, she could talk to a therapist, read some books or join a support group online (where she won’t risk outing Marcus). Who knows, Marcus could be the best sex and biggest love of her life.”

My two cents: You’re also struggling with the fact that you had sex—oral and fingering count—with someone you might not have had sex with if you had known this particular detail in advance of the oral and fingering. I believe that Marcus should have told you he was trans before you hooked up, NCA, and disclosing was in his own self-interest. But messing around with someone you wouldn’t have if you had known [insert relevant detail here] is a pretty common experience, NCA, and one most people bounce back from. And there are far worse forms of nondisclosure. While trans, poly, kinky and poz folks are all pressured to disclose, the world would be a much happier

place if abusers, users, assholes, and Fox News “personalities” were the ones who had to disclose before sex.

“There is absolutely no legal duty to disclose trans status,” added Levasseur. “A person’s trans status is ‘excruciatingly private’ and constitutionally protected information. There are lots of reasons why trans people might be stealth (or not out) like Marcus—for example, the terrifying rate of violence against trans people or the overwhelming statistics of discrimination. But I think disclosure is a good idea early on because it allows people to love you for who you are. Why not know that the person you are getting close to wants you? All of you. Don’t you want to find that out pretty early on? There are many people out there who think trans men are the ideal guys. Don’t waste your time on anyone else.”

Okay, NCA, let’s say you’ve explored your feelings and you’ve decided that you don’t want to keep seeing Marcus. Does that make you a bigot?

“It’s okay to have a preference—no judgment there,” said Levasseur. “If trans guys are not her thing, no harm done. I would just hope she is kind when she lets Marcus go. From what she says, it sounds like he wants to convince her to want him or love him, and

no one should be in the business of doing that. Everyone deserves to be loved because, not although.”

Levasseur wanted to close with a message to any trans men reading this:

“To the Marcuses of the world who will read NCA’s letter and think, ‘Oh no, who will love me, who will want me?’ and see it as just another message of rejection to add to a daily list of transphobia, body shame and internalized self-loathing that fuels the staggering trans suicide attempt rate: Don’t go there. Trans men are hot and deserve to be loved for the amazing men they are. They did not have their masculinity handed to them. They earned it—often through journeys that take unbelievable resilience and courage. An intentional man. The full package. And we deserve not to settle for someone who doesn’t appreciate our bodies or our histories. Find someone who wants the full you.”

Follow M. Dru Levasseur on Twitter @DruLawyer. Learn more about the Jim Collins Foundation at jimcollinsfoundation.org.

This week on the Lovecast, how to come out as polyamorous to your children: savagelovecast.com. Contact: mail@savagelove.net@fakedansavage on Twitter.

THEATRE/ PERFORMANCE (cont.)

THU. APRIL 10, 2014

The Untamed Shrews, Mike Lucas *First Avenue Club*, \$10, 8 pm

FRI. APRIL 11, 2014

Dead Authors Society: Around the World in 80 Days *Cedar Rapids Museum Of Art*, Free, 7 pm

SUN. APRIL 13, 2014

Miranda Sings *Englert Theatre*, \$26-\$50, 7 pm

MON. APRIL 14, 2014

Iowa's Rising Star Stand-Up Comedy Contest *Iowa City Yacht Club*, \$3, 9 pm

LITERATURE

WED. APRIL 2, 2014

Kembrew McLeod & D. Foy *Prairie Lights Books & Cafe*, Free, 6 pm

THU. APRIL 3, 2014

Artist Roundtable: Jason Isbell & Lindsay Hunter *Motley Cow Cafe*, Free, 4 pm

Talk to Me About Food, You Delicious Filthy Pig: Devotay Dinner with Molly O'Neill *Devotay*, \$50, 6 pm

Kyle Minor & Angela Pelster *Prairie Lights Books & Cafe*, Free, 6 pm

Sarabande's 20th Anniversary Reading *Prairie Lights Books & Cafe*, Free, 6 pm

Women's Studies Reading Group *Cedar Rapids Public Library-Downtown*, Free, 7 pm

Slow Collision & Little Village Hot Tin Roof Reading *Trumpet Blossom Cafe*, Free, 8 pm

FRI. APRIL 4, 2014

Lit Crawl *Downtown Iowa City*, Free, 5 pm

cookNscribble and Graze *Beadology*, Free, 5 pm

Rescue Press,F,OH & H_NGM_N *FilmScene*, Free, 5 pm

Iowa Review and Red Hen Press *M. C. Ginsberg*, Free, 5 pm

Hobart and a Strange Object *NODO*, Free, 5 pm

POETRY MAKE and Canarium *Revival*, Free, 6 pm

Wag's Revue & HTMLGIANT *White Rabbit*, Free, 6 pm

Coffee House Press and Ninth Letter *Dublin Underground*, Free, 6 pm

Curbside Splendor and Artifice Books *The Foxhead*, Free, 7 pm

Black Ocean and Spork Press *Studio 13*, Free, 7 pm

Lit Crawl After Party *Studio 13*, Free, 8 pm

SAT. APRIL 5, 2014

Mission Creek Book Fair *The Mill*, Free, 11 am

Family Storytime *Iowa City Public Library*, Free, 10 am

Storytime with Jon Eric *Iowa City Public Library*, Free, 10 am

Q&A with Rachel Kushner, hosted by Harry Stecopoulos *Prairie Lights Books & Cafe*, Free, 12 pm

Julian Rubenstein *Revival*, Free, 3 pm

Tarfia Faizullah *Catherine's Boutique*, Free, 4 pm

Tim Denevi *RSVP*, Free, 5 pm

Rachel Kushner with Jennifer Percy & Jamaal May *The Mill*, Free, 6 pm

Earthwords Release *Prairie Lights Books & Cafe*, Free, 7 pm

Language Lessons: Vol I, Paul Cary and the Small Scarys, King of the Fking Sea, Sam Locke-Ward and the Garbage Boys XXL, Brooke Strause & The Gory Details with readings from Bill Hillman and Janaka Stucky** *Gabe's*, \$8, 8 pm

MON. APRIL 7, 2014

Marcus Burke *Prairie Lights Books & Cafe*, Free, 7 pm

PRO-TIPS

THE TAO OF FAKE CHEESE

Wayne Diamante, actor, director and best-selling author of DIY parenting books like *Orphan Selection and Rearing Practices* and the triple-platinum hardcover autobiography *Poopy Diapers: Who Gives a Shit?*, answers his readers' questions in yet another installment of *Pro-Tips with Wayne Diamante*. Do you have a question, concern or grievance you'd like addressed in an online and/or print publication? Send it on over to askwaynediamante@gmail.com and I will do my level best to tell you what your problem is.



Dear Wayne,

I'm writing to ask your advice regarding the crippling lack of self-confidence I suffer. I'm tired of being a doormat; I want people to pay attention to me, especially ladies. I want the success I know I could achieve if I could just overcome my insecurities. Any advice you can provide will be greatly welcomed.

Sincerely,

Eugene

Dear Eugene,

Self-confidence can make all the difference in the world, just look at Julie Andrews in *The Sound of Music*. Fortunately, self-confidence

is something you can foster without a passel of adolescent virtuosos. Besides, having that many kids around without some kind of licensure or accreditation is definitely a legal gray area. I recommend taking a series of impersonal baby-steps such as:

- Parting your hair on the opposite side
- When making table reservations, leave a cool last name like Ragnarok, Sitting-Bull or Steel. Nobody gives a rat's ass about saving a table for Eugene Wiggins. Thighs get moist over private investigator Dr. Gene Night-Ranger, P.I., M.D., LSD.
- Call up your credit card company and demand a lower interest rate. Don't take no for

an answer. If customer service gives you static, ask to speak to a manager. *Always* speak to the manager.

You have to believe to achieve, Gene. You have to fake it until you make it. Gene, you have to shake it, but you must never, ever break it.

Peace,
Wayne

Dear Wayne,

I've just discovered my husband has been "sexy-texting" with a co-worker. I can only assume the worst. I feel so betrayed, what should I do?

Jane

TUE. APRIL 8, 2014

Andrew Zawacki & Mark Wunderlich *Prairie Lights Books & Cafe, Free, 7 pm*

WED. APRIL 9, 2014

Poe Reading *Old Capitol Museum, 6 pm*

Larry Baker *Prairie Lights Books & Cafe, Free, 7 pm*

Talk Art *The Mill, Free, 10 pm*

FRI. APRIL 11, 2014

Michael & Rick Mast *Prairie Lights Books & Cafe, Free, 11 am*

Allan Gugganus *Prairie Lights Books & Cafe, Free, 7 pm*

SAT. APRIL 12, 2014

Ladd Library Book Club *Cedar Rapids Public Library-Ladd Library, Free, 3 pm*

CINEMA

ONGOING:

The Unknown Known *FilmScene, Opens April 11*

WED. APRIL 2, 2014

Spinning Plates *FilmScene, \$5-\$8, 6 pm*

Dear Jane,

I can relate completely. BTW, it's called "sexting." For my part, I recently discovered Velveeta is not naturally yellow; they fucking color it that way. Can you believe that shit?! Talk about betrayal. As an ethnic American, I find this abuse of my food-like, cheese-substance sensibilities completely unconscionable. I've contacted a dozen senators, my state representatives and the customer rela-

SELF-CONFIDENCE CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD, JUST LOOK AT JULIE ANDREWS IN *THE SOUND OF MUSIC*.

tions department at Velveeta. Not only have I been ignored and verbally maltreated, I have yet to receive closure in a satisfactory or monetarily compensatory sort of way. You'd think I could at least parlay my outrage into a coupon or free sample—but, sadly, no. I wish I had a better answer for you Jane, but like you, I've come to learn the world is full of crushing disappointment, duplicity and assholes.

Remarkably,
Wayne



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CINEMA (cont.)

THU. APRIL 3, 2014

These Hopeless Savages *FilmScene*, \$5-\$8, 6 pm

FRI. APRIL 4, 2014

Who the *\$% is Jackson Pollock? *FilmScene*, \$5-\$8, 6 pm

Nymphomaniac (Volumes 1 & 2) *FilmScene*, \$5-\$8, 8 pm

Nymphomaniac: Bijou After Hours *FilmScene Free*-\$5, 11 pm

SAT. APRIL 5, 2014

Two-Lane Blacktop *FilmScene*, \$5-\$8, 3 pm

Nymphomaniac (Volumes 1 & 2) *FilmScene*, \$5-\$8, 7 pm

Nymphomaniac: Bijou After Hours *FilmScene Free*-\$5, 11 pm

SUN. APRIL 6, 2014

Nymphomaniac (Volumes 1 & 2) *FilmScene*, \$5-\$8, 8 pm

MON. APRIL 7, 2014

Nymphomaniac (Volumes 1 & 2) *FilmScene*, \$5-\$8, 8 pm

TUES. APRIL 8, 2014

Nymphomaniac (Volumes 1 & 2) *FilmScene*, \$5-\$8, 8 pm

WED. APRIL 9, 2014

Nymphomaniac (Volumes 1 & 2) *FilmScene*, \$5-\$8, 8 pm

THURS. APRIL 10, 2014

Nymphomaniac (Volumes 1 & 2) *FilmScene*, \$5-\$8, 8 pm

FRI., APRIL 11, 2014

Big Trouble in Little China: Bijou After Hours *FilmScene Free*-\$5, 11 pm

SAT., APRIL 12, 2014

Touba *FilmScene*, \$5-\$8, 6 pm

Big Trouble in Little China: Bijou After Hours *FilmScene Free*-\$5, 11 pm

SUN. APRIL 13, 2014

Touba *FilmScene*, \$5-\$8, 3 pm

THURS., APRIL 17, 2014

American Movie: Bijou After Hours *FilmScene Free*-\$5, 11 pm

FRI., APRIL 18, 2014

The Great Flood: Bijou After Hours *FilmScene Free*-\$5, 11 pm

SAT., APRIL 19, 2014

12 O'Clock Boys: Bijou After Hours *FilmScene Free*-\$5, 11 pm

FRI., APRIL 25, 2014

Gummo: Bijou After Hours *FilmScene Free*-\$5, 11 pm

SAT., APRIL 26, 2014

Gummo: Bijou After Hours *FilmScene Free*-\$5, 11 pm

FOODIE

SATURDAYS: Iowa City Winter Farmers Market *Iowa City Market Place/Sycamore Mall Free*, 10 am

WED. APRIL 2, 2014

Small Plates Dinner *Leaf Kitchen*, \$25, 6 pm

THU. APRIL 3, 2014

Hands-On: Festive Cake Decorating with Tracie Bettis *New Pioneer Food Co-op Coralville*, \$20, 6 pm

Talk to Me About Food, You Delicious Filthy Pig: Devotay Dinner with Molly O'Neill *Devotay*, \$50, 6 pm

THE STRAIGHT DOPE

WILL THE MELTING PERMAFROST RELEASE DEADLY GERMS?

Years ago I sent you a question about the possibility of global warming uncovering nasty things under the ice caps. Are we at risk of reawakening some kind of killer virus or bacteria that's just been waiting for an opportunity like this to feast? —Cecile Johnston, Vermont

Sorry to be late getting back to you, Cecile, but you should be grateful. Here's why:

1. There are indisputably killer germs trapped in the tundra. All we don't know is who, or what, is doomed.

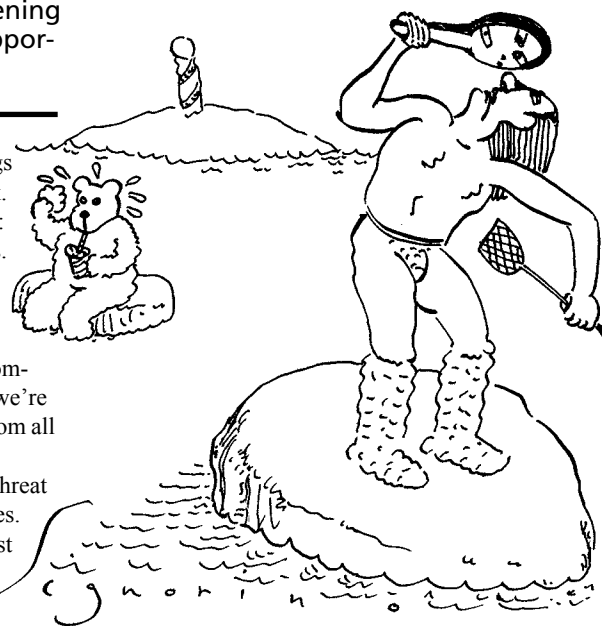
2. There's nothing you can do about it anyway. Your original question came in 13 years ago (we looked it up). So, thanks to my procrastination, you've enjoyed 13 years of ignorance-fueled bliss.

3. But now you've gone and asked again, and guess what: your carefree days are over. French scientists recently reported finding a giant viable virus in 30,000-year-old Siberian permafrost—viable being understood to mean infectious. The bug only kills amoebas, which

those taking the narrow view of things may figure means they're off the hook. But the more imaginative can reflect: First the viruses came for the amoebas. Then they came for me.

4. You know what, though? I'm not going to worry about it. It's not that I discount the possibility of bad things coming out of the permafrost. It's just that we're likely to have bad things coming at us from all over. Why sweat a few thawed germs?

About those germs. The microbe threat you hear most about nowadays is viruses. These strange pathogens are basically just pieces of genetic code in a container, with no metabolism until they're attached to a host. Strictly speaking



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Rachel Kushner
Saturday, April 5 at The Mill

they're not alive—which means, and I admit this sounds ominous, they can't be killed.

Viruses' innate hardiness allows them to remain intact in extreme conditions. All viruses contain either RNA or DNA; it's estimated mutations can occur in up to 50 percent of the genetic code before the virus's viability is threatened. Cold doesn't faze them—polio, influenza, and many other types of virus are known to survive freezing.

True, because viruses work by insinuating themselves into their host's genetic code, they tend to be confined to certain species. But that's no sure thing. Viruses frequently jump across species lines; one virus typically found in sea lions, for example, can also infect pigs, fish, rabbits, cattle, and humans.

Viruses aren't indestructible, of course. Oxidation, freeze-thaw cycles, and natural chemical reactions can all break down the DNA and RNA in ancient microbes. Theoretical considerations suggest no genetic material can survive intact beyond 2 or 3 million years. But that leaves lots of time during which countless viruses could have evolved and been trapped in ice.

The researchers who discovered the 30,000-year-old bug above claim it's the

oldest known virus that's still infectious. The RNA of a common tomato-plant virus was recovered from Greenlandic glacial ice formed between 500 and 140,000 years ago—viability unknown. But just wait.

The scenario that has some scientists worried is called "genome recycling." It goes like this: (1) virus-bearing ice in polar regions thaws and the meltwater enters local lakes; (2) migratory waterfowl who summer at said lakes drink the water; (3) the ingested viruses recombine in the birds' guts with similar modern viruses, producing nightmarish new strains; (4) the birds poop out the invigorated germs on their return to temperate regions; (5) oh, shit.

Here's the thing, though. Scary as the above may sound, the danger of the next global pandemic originating in polar meltwater so far is entirely speculative. I don't claim it'll never happen. On the contrary, circumstantial evidence suggests we've already had a few small-scale viral infections due to germs liberated by thawing.

But the major epidemics of our times have mostly originated in hot regions. HIV is thought to have emerged from nonhuman primates in central Africa. Ebola virus was first

seen in what was then Zaire (now Democratic Republic of Congo). West Nile virus came from (duh) the West Nile region of Uganda. New influenza strains commonly come out of the cities of East and Southeast Asia. Dengue fever and malaria, two scourges of long standing, are largely confined to the tropics.

There are lots of reasons for this, but one of the more obvious is that cold is a barrier. While viruses themselves can survive freezing temperatures, the insects and other critters that carry viruses generally don't. In fact, one of the less-publicized dangers of global warming is that mosquito-borne diseases such as dengue fever, malaria, and West Nile virus will be spread into higher elevations and latitudes, as rising temperatures make it possible for mosquitoes to reach areas they once found too chilly.

OK, we've all seen one version or another of *The Thing* (or, as in your columnist's case, read the originating John W. Campbell novel, *Who Goes There?*), about frozen horrors in the Antarctic ice that revive when thawed. So it's not surprising a lot of people are gazing apprehensively at developments in polar regions. All I'm saying is: watch your back.

—CECIL ADAMS

FOODIE (cont.)

SAT. APRIL 5, 2014

Vegan Brunch Trumpet Blossom Cafe, \$20, 11 am

SUN. APRIL 6, 2014

Last Call Brunch Buffet The Mill, \$15, 11 am

TUE. APRIL 8, 2014

Name that Taste! Umami with Roxane Mitten New Pioneer Food Co-op Coralville, \$15, 6 pm

WED. APRIL 9, 2014

Trivia Night Mendoza Wine Bar, \$5, 8 pm

THU. APRIL 10, 2014

Coq au Vin with Valerie Martin New Pioneer Food Co-op Coralville, \$15, 6 pm

SAT. APRIL 12, 2014

Success with High-Value Orchard Crops - Site Prep New Pioneer Food Co-op Coralville, \$75-\$95, All Day

MON. APRIL 14, 2014

Riesling Wine Tasting Devotay, Free, 6 pm

TUE. APRIL 15, 2014

Traditional Italian Meal in Courses New Pioneer Food Co-op Coralville, \$25, 6 pm
Cedar Ridge Devotay, \$30, 6 pm

COMMUNITY

ONGOING:

SUNDAYS: Pub Quiz The Mill \$1, 9 pm

WED. APRIL 2, 2014

Iowa City Open Coffee Iowa City Area Development Group, Free, 8 am

Bluebird Diner Fundraiser for 1105 Project Bluebird Diner (Iowa City) & Bluebird Cafe (N. Liberty)

THU. APRIL 3, 2014

Nooks and Crannies Tour Bruce more, Free, 6 pm

Country Dancing Wildwood Smokehouse & Saloon Free, 6 pm

SAT. APRIL 5, 2014

Ballet Cedar Rapids Public Library-Downtown, Free, 10 am

TUE. APRIL 8, 2014

Agribusiness/Bioscience Committee Meeting Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce, Free, 7 am

WED. APRIL 9, 2014

SBDC Lunch and Learn: eBay 101: How to Make a Profit on eBay BioVentures Center, Free, 12 pm

THU. APRIL 10, 2014

Local Government Affairs Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce, Free, 7 am

Adventures in Storytelling University of Iowa, Free, 12 pm

Hired Help Tour Bruce more, Free, 6 pm

FRI. APRIL 11, 2014

New Bo Open Coffee Club Brewed Cafe, Free, 8 am

SAT. APRIL 12, 2014

Orchard Crops: Site Prep and Water Management Wetherby Park, \$15-\$25, 8 am

NEWS QUIRKS

CURSES, FOILED AGAIN

Christopher Brent Fulton, 30, surrendered to authorities after seeing his photo as the suspect being sought for attempted bank robbery in Midwest City, Okla. He handed the teller a holdup note written on the back of a personal check but left it behind when he fled empty-handed, thinking he had tripped an alarm. The personal information on the check had been scratched out with a pen, but investigators were still able to read it and determine it belonged to Fulton's mother. (Oklahoma City's KOCO-TV)

LITIGATION NATION

After losing \$500,000 at a Las Vegas casino, retired car dealer Mark Johnston is suing the Downtown Grand for comping him dozens of drinks and lending him money to continue playing while he "was blackout intoxicated," according to his attorney, Sean Lyttle. Johnston, who lives in Ventura, Calif., has been a Las Vegas regular for three decades. (Associated Press)

UP IN THE AIR

• At least 150 commercial flights have landed at

the wrong airport or started to land and realized their mistake in time, according to government safety data and news reports since the early 1990s. The biggest trouble spot is Moffett Field, a joint civilian-military airport in San Jose, Calif., where six flights heading for Mineta San Jose International Airport 10 miles to the southeast have tried to land. Most incidents occur at night, when pilots have disregarded their navigation equipment because the information didn't match what they were seeing out their windows. "You've got these runway lights, and you are looking at them, and they're saying, 'Come to me, come to me. I will let you land.' They're like the sirens of the ocean," said former Air Force pilot Michael Barr, who teaches aviation safety at the University of California. (Associated Press)

• After a jet aborted its takeoff at Florida's MacDill Air Force Base because the crew thought it had hit a bird, possibly an osprey, wildlife manager Lindsey Garven searched the runway for a dead bird but found only a fish. DNA samples from the fish and the jet confirmed the accident was a fish strike. Garven said the 9-inch sheepshead was probably dropped by a bird that had been eating it

on the runway until the jet scared it off. The incident is only the second reported collision between an aircraft and a fish, the first having occurred in 1987 between a fish and a Boeing 737 taking off from Juneau, Alaska. (*The Tampa Tribune* and *The New York Times*)

SLIGHTEST PROVOCATION

• Fred John Govern, 92, died from cardiac arrest after a fistfight at a nursing home in Orwigsburg, Pa., that started when another resident cut in line at dinner. "My father had to have said something to him about jumping the line, which I know he would do, knowing my father," Fred Govern Jr. said. "The guy just turned around when my father checked him and started punching him." (Philadelphia's WPVI-TV)

• When a man refused to buy a woman with him a McFlurry at a McDonald's restaurant in Jacksonville, Fla., witnesses said the woman headed for his car, poured alcohol and gasoline on it, lit it on fire and then ran off. After people helped the man put out the fire, he drove away. (Orlando's WFTV-TV)

KIDS

MONDAYS: Toddler Storytime Iowa City Public Library
Free, 10 am

Play & Learn at Ladd Library Cedar Rapids Public Library-
Ladd Library Free, 10 am

WEDNESDAYS: Preschool Storytime Iowa City Public
Library Free, 10 am

THURSDAYS: Story Time at Ladd Library Cedar Rapids
Public Library-Ladd Library Free, 10 am

FRIDAYS: Toddler Time at the Downtown Library Cedar
Rapids Public Library-Downtown Free, 9 am

Mother Goose on the Loose at Ladd Library Cedar Rapids
Public Library-Ladd Library

Play & Learn at the Downtown Library Cedar Rapids
Public Library-Downtown Free, 6 pm

SAT. APRIL 5, 2014

Money Smart Day! Iowa Children's Museum, \$0-\$7, 10 am

Family Storytime Iowa City Public Library, Free, 10 am

Storytime with Jon Eric Iowa City Public Library, Free, 10 am

Youth Songwriting Workshop Iowa City Public Library,
Free, 12 pm

Mission Creek Festival - Chic-a-Go-Go Iowa City Public
Library, Free, 3 pm

Youth Songwriting Workshop Performance Iowa City
Public Library, Free, 5 pm

THU. APRIL 10, 2014

DaVinci's Doodles Iowa Children's Museum, \$0-\$7, 9 am

Money Smart with the Children's Museum Iowa City Public
Library, Free, 10 am

FRI. APRIL 11, 2014

DaVinci's Doodles Iowa Children's Museum, \$0-\$7, 9 am

Night at the Museum: Exploring the Ancient World
Museum of Natural History at UI, \$25, 6 pm

SAT. APRIL 12, 2014

Celebration of the Young Child Iowa Children's Museum,
\$0-\$7, 10 am

Family Storytime Iowa City Public Library, Free, 10 am

SUN. APRIL 13, 2014

Sunday Fun Day: Spring Training Iowa City Public Library,
Free, 2 pm

Night at the Children's Museum Iowa Children's Museum,
\$20, 8 pm

Who's LAUGHING Now?

Hyenas communicate through their backsides, according to Michigan State University researcher Kevin Theis, who has devoted his career to studying the contents of pouches next to the hyenas' anuses. The animals smear the pungent material, called hyena butter, on plants for other hyenas to sniff. Theis compared the hyena butter of four distinct species and concluded that the butter of more gregarious ones contained more complex information. Theis has yet to determine exactly what the messages contain or how the system of communication evolved, but his research is continuing. (*The Economist*)

NIMBY NINCOMPOOP

As CEO of ExxonMobil, Rex Tillerson promotes hydraulic fracturing and condemns its critics and "dysfunctional regulation" that he insists "is holding back the American economic recovery, growth and global competitiveness." As a homeowner, however, Tillerson has joined a lawsuit to block construction of a 160-foot tower next to his \$5 million Texas home that would supply water to a nearby fracking site. The suit argues

that the project would cause too much noise and traffic. Tillerson's lawyer said his client's concern is about the devaluation of his property, not fracking, although fracking opponent Rep. Jared Polis (D-Colo.) responded to Tillerson's suit by announcing, "We are thrilled to have the CEO of a major international oil and gas corporation join our quickly multiplying ranks." (*The Wall Street Journal*)

CHILD'S PLAY

The driver of a car that got stuck in a ditch in Vestoppland, Norway, told a passing snowplow operator that he ran off the road while making a U-turn to return home to get his driver's license. When the plow operator eyed him suspiciously, the diminutive driver explained that he was a dwarf. He was actually a 10-year-old boy joyriding with his 18-month-old sister in their family car. "He asked for help to tow his vehicle so they could continue their journey," police Officer Kai Lyshaugen said. Instead, the plow operator notified the authorities. (United Press International)

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SUSHI POPO

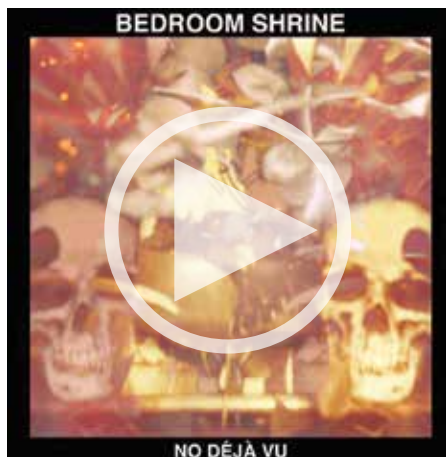
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BEDROOM SHRINE

No Déjà Vu

facebook.com/bedroomshrine
cartoucherecords.com/

If you are a follower of the music website Daytrotter.com, you have already been exposed to Johnnie Cluney's illustrations, which give the site its signature pen-and-ink look. What you might not be aware of, however, is Cluney's work as a musician with his band Bedroom Shrine. The group's debut full-length album, *No Déjà Vu*, is a product of the Quad Cities' tight-knit music commu-

AN ALBUM OF CONTRASTS, THE LAYERS OF NO DÉJÀ VU'S BIG GUITAR EFFECTS RECALL '90S ALTERNATIVE BANDS DINOSAUR JR. AND THE JESUS AND MARY CHAIN WHILE ALSO FEATURING FRAGILE, BEAUTIFUL STRINGS AND ACOUSTICS.

nity. *No Déjà Vu* is the first release for Iowa's newest record label, Cartouche Records, run by Davenport's Ragged Records' store owner Bob Herington. The album was recorded by Mike Gentry at Daytrotter's legendary analog studio the Horseshack and mastered by Pat Stolley, who also engineers Daytrotter sessions.

An album of contrasts, the layers of *No Déjà Vu*'s big guitar effects recall '90s alternative bands Dinosaur Jr. and The Jesus and Mary Chain while also featuring fragile, beautiful strings and acoustics. It's telling that Bedroom Shrine's original name was American Dust—*No Déjà Vu* is a window obscuring its songs



with a sooty lo-fi patina. At times, the flutery tape hiss that drags in the middle of the albums' tracks add to *No Déjà Vu*'s complex palette of tone and sound.

No Déjà Vu is a daring narrative sung from a first-person perspective. If the title of the album translates to "never felt like this before," then Cluney's narrator is both grateful for love and also untrusting of it. In "Cash For Gold," an anthem of love against all odds, he sings: "My life is like yours/We get cash for gold while our friends are all rich ... I need a doctor or remedy/to set my mind at ease/and all I wanted to tell you is be patient with my love."

There is beauty in decay. While many albums strive for perfect studio sound, Bedroom Shrine's *No Déjà Vu* uses its analog mix of hi- and lo-fidelity to underscore the emotional messiness, and occasional beauty, of being human.

—Mike Roeder

DAN BOBEK

Vibrating On Hi

danbeemusic.bandcamp.com

On Facebook, Dan Bobek has been posting a sort of slow motion performance art piece: Awkward personal observations, videos of himself playing the song he wrote an hour ago and dispatches from the trenches of the life of an Iowa City musician. *Vibrating On Hi* is a side effect of Bobek's relentless self-exposure, except that it's put together more carefully than what bubbles up on Facebook.

Vibrating On High isn't starting any musical revolutions—its influences are clear: Rock music from about 1971 through 1994. But

Bobek's voice has personality: It's a little nasal, a little growly and his diction makes every word clear, even though he double-tracks the lead vocals. Though the album was self recorded, he has a knack for getting good guitar tones; his acoustic guitars are resonant and his electrics are fuzzy and warm. I think that's even him playing drums. While he's no virtuoso, his drumming gives the songs what they need: a solid beat with plenty of boom and crash.

On "My Secret" Bobek sings, "I want to reach the top of the your charts," and the chorus of the song has a hook that could make that happen. Bobek isn't a lyricist trying to burn

SHOULDN'T THERE BE ROOM IN THE WORLD FOR PLAIN-SPOKEN, SINCERE AFFIRMATIONS? VIBRATING ON HI SEEMS TO BE ABOUT BOBEK CONVINCING HIMSELF TO LIVE POSITIVELY.

the world down with his profundity. When he sings "I believe you can hear me when I'm singing, I believe it will all come true somehow," it's so plain and straightforward I look for something hidden that may not actually be there. In "To Be Alive," the chorus asks you to "remember to be alive."

But shouldn't there be room in the world for plain-spoken, sincere affirmations? *Vibrating On Hi* seems to be about Bobek convincing himself to live positively. He could write gnarlier lyrics if he wanted, but he doesn't want to. I'd normally be bothered by "The truth will give you back yourself" as a song lyric, because I'm a cynical bastard. Still, it's hard not to enjoy *Vibrating On High*. Bobek has some of Jonathan Richman's wide-eyed, goofball sincerity, with a much less annoying singing voice. What's not to like? **IV**

If Kent Williams had gone to high school with Vladimir Putin, he would have superglued Putin's locker shut.



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ARIES (March 21-April 19): In his novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, Milan Kundera says that the brain has "a special area which we might call poetic memory and which records everything that charms or touches us, that makes our lives beautiful." In the coming days, it will be especially important for you to tap into this power spot in your own grey matter, Aries. You need to activate and stir up the feelings of enchantment that are stored there. Doing so will make you fully alert and available for the new delights that will be swirling in your vicinity. The operative principle is like attracts like.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Our ancestors could see the Milky Way Galaxy spread out across the heavens on every clear night. Galileo said it was so bright, it cast a shadow of his body on the ground. But today that glorious spectacle is invisible to us city-dwellers. The sky after sundown is polluted with artificial light that hides 90 percent of the 2,000 stars we might otherwise see. If you want to bask in the natural illumination, you've got to travel to a remote area where the darkness is deeper. Let's make that your metaphor, Taurus. Proceed on the hypothesis that a luminous source of beauty is concealed from you. To become aware of it, you must seek out a more profound darkness.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20): "Dear Gemini: I don't demand your total attention and I don't need your unconditional approval. I will never restrict your freedom or push you to explain yourself. All I truly want to do is to warm myself in the glow of your intelligence. Can you accept that? I have this theory that your sparkle is contagious -- that I'll get smarter about how to live my own life if I can simply be in your presence. What do you say? In return, I promise to deepen your appreciation for yourself and show you secrets about how best to wield your influence. -Your Secret Admirer."



CANCER (June 21-July 22): The Cancerian artist Rembrandt became one of the world's greatest painters. It was a struggle. "I can't paint the way they want me to paint," he said about those who questioned his innovative approach. "I have tried and I have tried very hard, but I can't do it. I just can't do it!" We should be glad the master failed to meet his critics' expectations. His work's unique beauty didn't get watered down. But there was a price to pay. "That is why I am just a little crazy," Rembrandt concluded. Here's the moral of the story: To be true to your vision and faithful to your purpose, you may have to deal with being a little crazy. Are you willing to make that trade-off?



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): The Indian spiritual teacher Nisargadatta Maharaj offered a three-stage fable to symbolize one's progression toward enlightenment. In the first stage, you are inside a cage located in a forest where a tiger prowls. You're protected by the cage, so the tiger can't hurt you. On the other hand, you're trapped. In the second stage, the tiger is inside the cage and you roam freely through the forest. The beautiful animal is trapped. In the third stage, the tiger is out of the cage and you have tamed it. It's your ally and you are riding around on its back. I believe this sequence has resemblances to the story you'll be living in the coming months. Right now you're inside the cage and the tiger is outside. By mid-May the tiger will be in the cage and you'll be outside. By your birthday, I expect you to be riding the tiger.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): What is "soul work," anyway? It's like when you make an unpredictable gift for someone you love. Or when you bravely identify one of your unripe qualities and resolve to use all your willpower and ingenuity to ripen it. Soul work is when you waded into a party full of rowdy drunks and put your meditation skills to the acid test. It's like when you teach yourself not merely to tolerate smoldering ambiguity, but to be amused by it and even thrive on it. Can you think of other examples? It's Soul Work Month for you.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Are you close to anyone who is a catalytic listener? Is there a person who tunes in to what you say with such fervent receptivity that you get inspired to reveal truths you didn't realize you knew? If so, invite this superstar out to a free lunch or two in the coming days. If not, see if you can find one. Of course, it is always a blessing to have a heart-to-heart talk with a soul friend, but it is even more crucial than usual for you to treat yourself to this luxury now. Hints of lost magic are near the surface of your awareness. They're still unconscious, but could emerge into full view during provocative conversations with an empathetic ally.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): On my blog, I quoted author Ray Bradbury: "You must stay drunk on writing so reality cannot destroy you." I asked my readers what word they would use in place of "writing" to describe how they avoided being destroyed by reality. Popular responses were love, music, whiskey, prayer, dreams, gratitude, and yoga. One woman testified that she stayed drunk on sexting, while another said "collecting gargoyles from medieval cathedrals," and a third claimed her secret was "jumping over hurdles while riding a horse." There was even a rebel who declared she stayed drunk on writing so she could destroy reality. My question is important for you to meditate on, Scorpio. Right now you must do whatever's necessary to keep from being messed with by reality.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Does your mother know what you are up to these days? Let's hope not. I doubt if she would fully approve, and that might inhibit your enthusiasm for the experiments you are exploring. It's probably best to keep your father out of the loop as well, along with other honchos, cynics, or loved ones who might be upset if you wander outside of your usual boundaries. And as for those clucking voices in your head: Give them milk and cookies, but don't pay attention to their cautious advice. You need to be free of the past, free of fearful influences, and free of the self you're in the process of outgrowing.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): For the foreseeable future, I urge you not to spend much time wrangling with bureaucrats and know-it-alls. Avoid frustrating projects that would require meticulous discipline. Don't even think about catching up on paperwork or organizing your junk drawer or planning the next five years of your career. Instead, focus on taking long meandering walks to nowhere in particular. Daydream about an epic movie based on your life story. Flirt with being a lazy bum. Play noncompetitive games with unambitious people. Here's why: Good ideas and wise decisions are most likely to percolate as you are lounging around doing nothing -- and feeling no guilt for doing nothing.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Are you waiting? Are you wondering and hoping? Are you calculating whether you are needed, and if so, how much? Do you wish the signs were clearer about how deeply you should commit yourself? Are you on edge as you try to gauge what your exact role is in the grand scheme of things? I'm here to deliver a message from the universe about how you should proceed. It's a poem by Emily Dickinson: "They might not need me but -- they might -- / I'll let my Heart be just in sight -- / A smile so small as mine might be / Precisely their necessity -"



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You will soon get a second chance. An opportunity you failed to capitalize on in the past will re-emerge in an even more welcoming guise, and you will snag it this time. You weren't ready for it the first time it came around, but you are ready now! It's probably a good thing the connection didn't happen earlier, because at that time the magic wasn't fully ripe. But the magic is ripe now!

HOMEWORK: Choose one area of your life where you're going to stop pretending.

—Rob Breznsky



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